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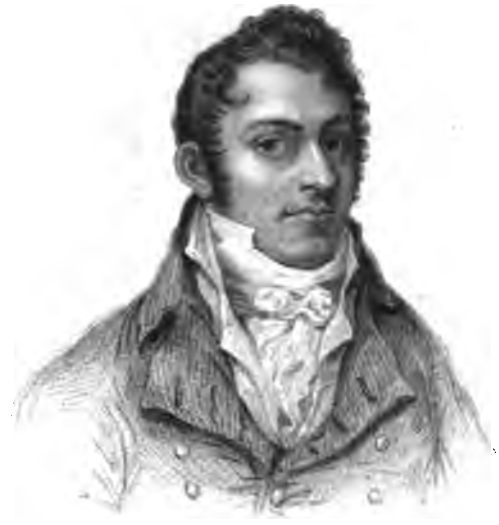

J. Woodruff del. H. Pywood Sculp.

W. PECK Æt. 21. 1806.

"Omne meum tempus in Studiis consumo."

THEOLOGICAL

Tracts.

BY

A THEOPHILANTHROPIST.

"For modes of Faith, let graceless zealots fight,
"His can't be wrong, whose life is in the right."

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Part the First.

DISCOURSES

ON THE

DIVERSITY OF

Theological Opinions;

WITH

Some Notes

ON THE

AGE OF THE WORLD;

AND

A CATALOGUE

OF THE

Scriptures of Different Nations.

PREFACE.

In presenting these discourses to the public the reader will naturally expect some apology.

The first was published in 1809, *in quarto, under the title* "A Discourse on the Being of a God, by an Unitarian:" *only a few copies were printed, for the perusal of some of my friends. Since which period I have made many corrections; therefore it is not* THAT *but* THIS *publication I avow as my sentiments.*

The addresses prefixed to the discourses will inform the reader what were the motives that induced me to commit my thoughts to paper, assuring him that they are my real sentiments; and I publish them on my conviction of their truth. I shall now lay down my pen, assuring the barking ecclesiastic or reviewer, he will never draw me from my retirement and obscurity to defend these opinions, but leave the book to its fate; desiring him, if he find fault with it, to remember the admonition of Christ, "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thy own eye?"

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DISCOURSE

ATTEMPTING TO PROVE THAT THE ROOT OF ALL SYSTEMS OF THEOLOGY ARE THE SAME.

ADDRESS.

The prejudices of people of different faiths, have caused the author to examine certain writings accounted sacred by different nations; and also the polemical writers of this country of the greatest celebrity: the impression they have made on his mind are delineated in the following pages

A

DISCOURSE, &c.

"O my people, worship God; ye have no God besides him; ye only imagine falsehoods in setting up idols and intercessors of your own making." (Cap. 2.) *"Who is the Lord of Heaven and Earth? God. Have ye therefore taken unto yourselves protectors besides him, who are unable either to help or to defend themselves from hurt? Have they attributed companions unto God, who have created as he hath created? God is the Creator of all things; he is the one, the VictoriousGod!"* (Cap. 13, Sale's Alcoran of Mahommed.)

It is customary, in these Christian countries, to take the texts of sermons or discourses on theology from holy writ, commonly called the Old and the New Testament, suitable to the subject of the discourse which is delivered or written; and that discourse commented from the same. In conformity to that custom, I take my text from a book accounted sacred by the Mahometans, and to hold sceptical ideas of it would, in that country, be considered as monstrous.

As it is my intention to examine the tenets of all the grand branches of theological systems in

the world, I have taken my text from the book above noted; and hope to make it appear to an impartial observer, that all religious systems are intended to make men good; and not as men, who have contracted ideas, view them; that their faith is the only true one, and doom others, who may chance to be educated in a different belief, to everlasting punishment.

Mahomet, in the two quotations, insists on the *unnecessity* of having mediators between God and man. This declaration of a prophet of the justness of God, is worthy to be transmitted to posterity. Whatever Mahomet may have promulgated respecting his being a prophet, sent from the Most High God, to gain the ascendancy over his countrymen, necessary to a reformation amongst mankind; he knew and, as above, expressed himself, that he had no more authority from the Omnipotent than any other teacher; and, in the sense of the word prophet, he, nor any other teacher, could or did mean any more than that they possessed more refined and enlarged ideas of a Supreme Being; and that, by their sublimity of precept and exemplary conduct, they endeavoured to draw mankind into the practice of virtue. Such was the intention of all other legislators, who endeavoured to reform mankind. In the dark ages of the world, when miracles* were esteemed, the reformers were obliged to have recourse to these pretensions to gain that ascendancy which was necessary to the great work they had undertaken.

Mankind, in all ages as well as the present, (particularly those that have weak intellects), build their faith on the implicit credit of these

* See Chubb on Miracles, &c.

teachers ;† some have no inclination, and others no ability to think for themselves ; consequently are led on in the path their teachers point out; never thinking to question whether that is the most eligible one or not.§ Witness the gigantic strides of fanaticism recorded of people in different nations, who have considered that the path pursued by them was the only true one, and that all others led to misery and wretchedness ; little

† Dr. WHITE has eloquently defined the cause of the success of innovators, called reformers. "God has constituted us free agents, and has endued us with faculties, which though sufficient, if properly exerted, to lead us into the discovery of truth, are still limited and circumscribed. We are therefore fallable creatures, liable to be imposed upon either by the delusions of our own imaginations, or by the artificers of interested imposters. Unqualified for deep speculation and laborious research, the great bulk of mankind is oftener directed by fancy, by prejudice, or interest, than by reason. Hence it happens, that, misled by the craft and cunning of those who lie in wait to deceive, or seduced by doctrines flattering and agreeable to the corruption of the human heart, numbers, in all ages, forsaking the truth, have embraced with willingness, and propagated with zeal, the grossest and most pernicious mistakes."—*Sermons*, page 51.

§ "The people," says Bishop SYNNESIUS, in *Calvit*, page 315, "are desirous of being deceived; we cannot act otherwise respecting them. The case was similar with the ancient priests of Egypt; and, for this reason, they shut themselves up in their temples, and there composed their mysteries, out of the reach of the eye of the people." And also, "for had the people been in the secret they might have been offended at the deception played upon them. In the mean time how is it possible to conduct one's self otherwise with the people so long as they are the people? For my own part, to myself, I shall always be a philosopher, but in dealing with the mass of mankind, I shall be a priest."—"A little jargon," says Gregory Nazianzen to St. Jerome, (*Hieron. ad Nap.*) "is all that is necessary to impose on the people. The less they comprehend, the more they admire. Our forefathers, and doctors of the church, have often said, not what they thought, but what circumstances and necessity dictated to them."

supposing that their teachers taught only a mythological system of truth, disguised under hyperbolical figures, to gain ascendancy over their minds, the more successfully to draw them aside from the paths of misery, to that which should lead them to happiness, and make them good members of society. To demonstrate this we need only refer to the sacred writings, where we shall find it enforcing, that, "*A remnant of all shall be saved;*" (i. e.) a remnant of all religious opinions in the world; let their faith be what it may; provided their conduct in this life be regulated by that unerring standard, *Virtue.* From which we may safely infer, that, from the beginning of time, some have been found (before any religious systems disturbed the world) who had regulated their conduct by that standard so as to inherit the favour of the first Author of Nature: independent of that faith in any prophet, which the devotee says is necessary to salvation.

The different sectaries all build their faith on some sacred record of antiquity; some of more and some of less merit for regulating man in society. The Bible is the criterion of the Jews; and the basis of the Christian faith; is considered as the word of God, and was written by inspiration; whether or no the writers were inspired it is of no consequence to us. The laws of Moses were only civil laws to regulate that people; and it is evident, by what remain of them, that Moses never taught the doctrine of the immortality of the soul; therefore he had no idea of reward or punishment hereafter: consequently his laws had no restraint on men's actions, only in a civil manner. These laws were such as were calculated to regulate that nation for the good of its people; and society finding

the value of them (being at that time superior to most of their neighbours), immortalized the author as divine. This shews they are the laws of man and not of God; and are no more calculated to gain life eternal than any other laws: and possess no other saving power than which nature every where presents:—"*none can be saved but those that regulate their lives by virtue.*" The laws thus given to the Jews, are sufficient to guide men to the practice of virtue, if the professors adhere to the precepts laid down in that volume, as well as any other system promulgated.

The next is the New Testament, which was bequeathed to the world by Jesus Christ and his apostles. The superstructure of which is raised from the books of the Jews, mixed with other notions which then prevailed in the East. This person observing the degenerate state of his countrymen, who were inured to rapine and war, and having more than common knowledge of the then existing theology, endeavoured to reform them by that beautiful precept, "*If a man smite thee on one cheek, turn the other to him also.*" He has left nothing of his doctrines in his own writing; consequently what has come down to us was written by his zealous supporters, who have made him of divine origin.* To do which, they united in their accounts, the more easily to impress belief, that he was the person prophesied of in Isaiah and others, considered prophets by the Jews; which books, it is probable, are nothing but allegorical Hebrew poems, and on comparative estimate on the same basis as the Pagan allegories, whose gods were considered,

*See Stone's Sermons, where he attempts to prove that Christ was a Man, and not the Son of God; and also Davie's Sermon, "Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

by the plebeians of those nations, of divine original. Scarcely any of the accounts of the life of Jesus agree with each other in some of the most material circumstances. The silence of the contemporary Pagan and Jewish* historians make it appear probable, that he was not such a person as some of his followers have supposed. Just after the apostles' days was the time most likely to know more of the divinity of Jesus; yet we find the fathers† of the church bring such contradictions to the gospel, as delivered by the apostles and others, that it is quite uncertain what is and what is not the true precepts of Christ; therefore, as his doctrines are rendered so uncertain by the interpolations‡ of bigots or partiest to favour their own corrupt views, we cannot tell to what length those pious frauds were practised, therefore we cannot give implicit

* If we except a book called "*Stephen Toldoth Yeschu*," which was published by Mr. WAGENSEIL, in Vol. II. of his work, called "*Tela Ignea*." This book was known in the second century; "COLSUS cites it with exultation;" there is another book that bears the name of *Toledos Jesu*, published by M. HULDRIC in 1705. The author calls himself Jonathan, was contemporary with Christ, and lived at Jerusalem. See Note (A) Appendix.

† An author who was conversant with the writings of the fathers of the church, speaks thus of them. "They take such a liberty in the interpretation of the Scriptures, that one has much a do to think them serious or capable of believing what they themselves have written. It is certain if a modern author was to write at the rate the greatest amongst them frequently do, he would be universally despised and neglected; for a proof," says he, "he (the reader) may have a specimen in a piece of St. Cyprian against the Jews, and to St. Augustin upon the Psalms, where he will have, if I mistake not, enough to turn his stomach." See Note (B) of the Appendix.

‡ For the proof of this, peruse Marsh's Edition of "Michaelis on the New Testament;" "Evanson's Dissonance," 8vo.; also many Unitarian sermons; and also the Note (C) of the Appendix.

credit to all that is related respecting his divine origin. Sufficient is it for us, at this present period, to follow his laws as we find them,* and not build our faith upon things of which we are ignorant. The writings of the apostles concerning the doctrine of Christ, contain the most sublime precepts for regulating our conduct in this life, and enforce the adoration of one Supreme God. This society of religionists has branched into many sectaries, who all shelter their opinions on some text or obscure passage in the Testament; and explain the same in such a manner as to favour their belief and own private views, and not as was intended by the original penman. This has led to war, hatred, and bloodshed, by different branches of society against each other: a practice inimical to the precepts of Christ, and perverting the intention of one of the most sublime laws of this legislator: "*Do unto others as you would they should do unto you:*" also the axiom I have before quoted. These laws are purely of a pacific kind, and an utter contradiction to their practices of rapine and war. They pervert his gospel to the worst of purposes, and are enemies to Christ and his doctrine. They are not Christians and followers of his doctrines, who profess to believe in his divine origin, and whose actions are contrary to their belief.

The next great branch of the society of Religious, is the Mahometans;§ which sprung up after Christ, and was intended by the founder to unite in one focus the different systems then

* For a developement of the laws of Christ, and what is that law as far as it can with any certainty be known, see Chubb on "The True Gospel of Jesus Christ asserted."

§ For a particular account of Mahomet, his doctrine, &c, see Sale's Alcoran of Mahommed, 2 vols. 8vo.

in being. How far he has succeeded I shall not determine: I shall only examine whether the doctrine be competent to answer the end proposed. The Alcoran, as his followers blindly say, came from Heaven, in chapters; and was revealed to Mahomet by an angel, and is believed as such by one tenth part of mankind. In the Christian countries it is universally considered as spurious, and not from God; and as I am addressing myself to Christians, I shall enforce no other argument. As God is not a partial Being, as I hope to make it appear in the sequel, therefore if none were to be saved but those that believed in the several prophets which chance had placed amongst them, he must inevitably be partial to a particular class of his creatures.

The Koran (which is the guide of their conduct,) every where enforces the utmost reverence to the Supreme Architect; and vengeance to the deceitful and libertinous character, and those inimical to the practice of virtue. This book of laws is calculated for the good order of society, the reformation of vice, and adapted to the country which is was intended to reform; and is, therefore, of equal divine authority with any other.

The next that follow in succession are those most ancient and venerable remains of antiquity, that have excited the attention of the enlightened in all ages, the Bramins, the Chinese, and many other nations which are called Pagan. These possess their sacred books of the greatest antiquity; and are the basis on which are built all the other records that are accounted sacred by the Jews, Christians, and Mahometans. These books contain the most sublime ideas of a God; and such precepts for the guidance of men in

this world, as may justly entitle them to be sacred, and penned by inspiration from God, as any of the foregoing *unerring* scriptures, that were written for the guidance of the respective divisions enumerated.

I have thus far given a short retrospective view of the basis of all the grand divisions in the world; and find that they all direct us to two fundamental points: 1st, "*To worship the Omnipotent Creator with piety;*" 2d, "*To do unto our neighbours as we would they should do unto us.*"

By fulfilling these fundamental laws, which nature presents to us, *without these sacred records*, is sufficient to gain the favour of the First Former of Nature.

Many different sectaries will clamor * and say, that theirs is the only true doctrine, and

* See on this subject in Volney's Ruins of Empires.

"A learned professor of one of the universities of this island has given to the public this learned paragraph: 'To descent in this country from the doctrines of the established church, is to descent without a real cause.' Now we may observe here, that those words might be used as logically in a mosque at Constantinople, as in the church or kirk of an English or Scotch university. The argument of the professor runs thus: the doctrines of the established church are in all respects conformable with the sacred writings; therefore to descent from them is to descent without a real cause." The mufti, in the mosque at Constantinople, using the same language, means, by the sacred writings, the Koran; and he assuredly has as great a right, as we shall see in the sequel, to assert that the doctrines of his established church agree with the Koran, as the Scotch or English professor to ascribe a conformity between each of their doctrines, and their holy scriptures.

"But may we not suppose a Mahometan Dissenter to address the mufti in these words? 'You have the advantage of a learned education, and are here in authority. I was educated in Persia, by a mufti in as great repute for learning

that mine is false. To such I would premise, that when we reflect that God created this

as yourself, and, in that kingdom, he was of equal authority. Now, my Persian instructor assured me, that the established church in Persia are, in all respects, conformable with the Divine Koran. I have, therefore, a real cause for dissenting from the established church at Constantinople, because I am not learned enough to judge between you learned gentlemen, who can maintain, with equal pertinacity, your respective opinions. The argument between you, whose doctrine is really in all respects conformable to the Divine Koran, who is to decide? *Both of you were educated in the opinions you now profess to believe:* it is the intent of each of you to maintain them: your rank, your consequence, your wealth, depends on your respective opinions remaining established in each of your kingdoms. Now there are upwards of seventy-two different sects professing Islanism; and, as it is seventy-one to one against your being right, surely it does not argue much in favour of your discretion, to use an argument which each of these seventy-one sects may retort against you; and when, *probably, no one will decide in your favour except those of your own sect*, and who will be considered by others to have imbibed similar prejudices.'

"If the case of the two mufties, the Turkish and the Persian, were laid before our learned professor, I have not the least doubt that he would dismiss the pretentions of both with strict impartiality. 'Neither of you,' he would say, 'can be allowed to be a judge in his own cause. What each of you assert in his own mosque, before men of his own persuasion, whose applause he will obtain for the warmth of his sentiments in unison with theirs, cannot pass with the impartial and unbiassed. Since each of you ascribe the want of reason to the other, the probability is, *that both of you have sacrificed that faculty of your mind to your prejudice.* You cannot both be right; and as so many millions of persons bowing to the authority of Mahomet equally with yourselves, interpret his words in a manner which both of you explode, I, who know little of the Koran, cannot judge between you; but, whatever may be the value of your respective opinions, *I shall recommend to you to have some regard for that of others, who may have as good or better grounds than you have for maintaining their doctrines.*'"—Monthly Repository, Vol. V. page 16.

globe, which hangs upon nothing, but is moved in an orbit regulated by certain laws, in the boundless infinity of space, where worlds infinitum revolve in their spheres; man was created to people the earth, and was supplied with every necessary which nature required; consequently, man was created by God, and all are alike his children: he endowed him with reason, which was to be his guide through life, and is of the greatest consequence to him: if he make not proper use of it, he perverts the intention of his Creator. This reason is our monitor; and tells us, on reflection, that which is right to ourselves or neighbours, and that which is contrary. This inward monitor is the *good principle that the Jews were told they would receive by following the laws of the prophet Moses; the Christians, by the revelations of Christ, which he taught under the hyperbolical figure of the Holy Ghost; the Mahometans, by following the laws of the prophet Mahomet; the Bramins, and others, by their different prophets, that have promulgated their laws: and is that pleasing satisfaction we feel in our minds of doing that which is good.* From which we may safely infer, what Mahomet says in my text: "*O my people, worship God; ye have no God besides him; ye only imagine falsehoods in setting up idols and* INTERCESSORS *of your own making.*"

As God is the Creator of all, he gave to the first people that criterion called *conscience*, whereby to regulate their conduct, and secure repose in another world. If he had not given them a means whereby they might be saved, he would not have acted as their parent; therefore this power was sufficient in the first ages (as they had no prophet sent from God for

thousands of year, if we credit the records of the Jews) to save mankind, independent of any written laws that have come down to us: consequently, sufficient unto this present period, without the unintelligible jargon of the popular creeds.

If the sectary would consider that all men are alike to God, he must naturally suppose, that each has an equal power from the Omnipotent to inherit his favour; recollecting that it is education* that has formed his belief; or the company he has kept, or the books he has read; and not the superiority of their precepts: consequently, his belief is not to be considered infallible. Had he been educated amongst the Bramins, he would have been a Bramin; and

* For a developement of the impression which education makes on the mind, see Bigland's Letters on Ancient History, and his Essays. And for prejudice on the mind, when once formed, peruse the following elegant observation:

"There is something exceedingly curious in the constitution and operation of prejudice. It has the singular ability of accommodating itself to all the possible varieties of the human mind. Some passions and vices are but thinly scattered among mankind; and find only here and there a fitness for reception. But prejudice, like the spider, makes every where its home. It has neither taste or choice of place; but all that it requires is room. There is scarcely a situation, except fire or water, in which a spider will not live. So, let the mind be as naked as the walls of an empty and forsaken tenement, gloomy as a dungeon, or ornamented with the richest abilities of thinking; let it be hot, cold, dark, or light, lonely or inhabited; still prejudice, if undistubed, will fill it with cobwebs; and live, like the spider, where there seems nothing to live on. If the one prepares her food by poisoning it to her palate and her use, the other does the same; and as several of our passions are strongly charactered by the animal world, prejudice may be denominated the spider of the mind."—*Redhead York's Letters from France.*

would have considered their records of divine origin, as well as those of Christ. So little has any one to pride himself on his belief, that it ought to moderate his passions, and direct his prayer to that Creator from whom all our blessings spring. How different has it been; according to records,* in all ages, nations and people have made war with each other, purely in the cause and support of religious systems; and deluged nations and cities with the blood of men who professed a different faith; merely because they held speculative doctrines different from them. I would beg such speculatists and intolerants to consider, that all faiths are a matter of opinion, built on no other foundation than ancient fables; and that, if we practice virtue in all our dealings here, we shall meet with happiness hereafter, let our speculative opinions be what they may. I shall now conclude, in hope that, on serious reflection, all such will acknowledge their own imperfectness; and unite with me in a prayer to the Disposer of all events.

" O thou, who knowest both what is present and what is concealed! O thou, who art the

* The holy wars may be advanced as a striking example. The various murders of the Jews by the Christians, and the massacres of the Protestants by the Catholics, when a reflective mind meditates on those important events, it makes his hair stand erect at such cruelties and ask himself, " Is this done in the cause of religion, to please our Common Father? This is not religion. Religion infuses into our minds meakness and charity to all mankind. Oh deluded mortals! you are pursuing phantoms of your imagination; rendering yourselves monsters that ought to be exterminated from the earth!"

Understanding of the sinner and of the saint! O teach thy devotees the several works, which it will please thee, that they should perform; and by that means we may imprint on our obsequious hearts, the reflection of thy Majestic Essence." (From the 4th Adhyaye of the Sheeve Pouran.)

A

DISCOURSE

ON BAPTISM.

ADDRESS.

The author, after perusing the various controversies respecting baptisms, was induced to commit to paper his thoughts; conceiving that the real meaning of the texts had been misconstrued.

A

DISCOURSE, &c.

"I indeed baptize you with water to repentance: but he who cometh after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry; he will baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." Matthew iii. 11.

JOHN, whose language I have taken for my text, baptized with water unto repentance. In the primitive times it was considered typical of washing the soul pure from worldly corruption; as the skin is washed clean by water, so ought the soul of man from evil. But after a certain period the mind of man deviated from truth and wandered into imaginary shades, darkened their former perceptions with false glosses, so that new views of the subject were promulgated; time advanced and ideas multiplied, so did systems of religious opinions. We find one party insisting on water baptism of adults, * others on

* I have perused a very interesting book intitled "The Dippers Dipt; or the Anabaptists dvck'd and plvng'd over head and ears, at a Disputation in Southwark, &c. By Daniel Featley, London, 1645," 4to.

water baptism of infants, and others on the baptism of fire, which is the Holy Ghost.* The texts of scriptures, for their several opinions, I shall quote and briefly examine the subject; after which I have reason to suppose the reader will agree with me, that it is only the baptism of the mind, typical that the mind must be rendered pure by virtuous actions, which was intended by the practice of water baptism.

"Go ye and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

" And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he who believeth not shall be condemned." Mark xvi. 15, 16.

"Know ye not that as many of us as have been baptized into Jesus Christ, have been baptized into his death? so we also should walk in newness of life." Romans vi. 3, 4.

The apostle baptized the gaoler with all that belonged to him. And Lydea and her household. Acts xvi. 15.

The custom of the church is adduced by some. St. Austine says, " the custome of our mother the church, in baptizing infants, is no way to be slighted or rejected; neither were it at all to be beleeved if it were not an apostolicall tradition."

The synod of Milevitan decreed that " whosoever shall deny baptisme to children, even as

* In support of this opinion, see the " Apology for the True Christian Divinity professed by the People called Quakers, by Robert Barclay," 8vo.

soon as they come out of their mothers' womb, let him be accursed."

Those who hold that baptism is only typical of the saving power we receive from God, by a pure and good life, acting whilst here with perfect meekness and charity to all animated nature; the following injunctions they quote:

"He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire." Matt. iii. 11.

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, unless a man be born of water and of the spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." John iii. 5.

"Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such like is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child he can by no means enter therein." Luke xviii. 16, 17.

That great reformer, which is the author of the two last sentences, clothed his sublime precepts under the hyperbolical figure of baptism of the Holy Ghost. I have, in a former discourse, shewn that the Holy Ghost was the good principle represented under different names by different teachers according to the respective ideas of theology they promulgated. Christ informs us, that "*Except a man be born again he shall not see the kingdom of God;*" the meaning of which is, *that to be saved we must new model our mind and action by a steady adherence to moral laws, which teach us how to regulate our actions towards God and man;* it is not in being baptized with water that is to secure happiness, but in the practice of virtue. Mr. Cartwright* draws the same conclusion

* Confutation of the Rhemist Translation of the New Testament, folio.

respecting water baptism, "For the baptisme of John and our Sauiour Christ being one and the same," "that *many are washed with the sacramentall water which haue no spot of sinne done away.* For seeing thereunto it needfull the washing and purging hand of our Sauiour Christ, and the request of a good conscience vnto God, (which onely the eternall loue of God, and his free election before the beginning of the world,† is able to procure the presence of;) it cannot bee that the sacramentall water, which alwayes is not thus accompanied, can make men snow white from their sinnes."

Tertullian, one of the ancient fathers, saith, "That it is a carnall act that we are dipped in water, but it is the effect of the spirit that we are deliuered from sinnes." Cyprian saith, "that remission of sinnes, whether it be giuen by baptisme or by other sacraments, is properly of the spirit of God; in that to him alone belongeth the priuiledge of the affecting thereof. Also, whether Judas or Paul baptise it is Christ§ that washeth, absolueth, and doth away the sinne. Neither doth water wash the soule, but first itselfe is washed of the spirit, that it may wash others spiritually."

† That is the Almighty author of nature, when he created all animated Beings, endowed them with intelectual sense which was to be their guide through life, this sense informs them what is and what is not virtue, and this virtue is the Holy Ghost or the good principle we nourish in our bosom when we are baptized, *i. e.* when we cast off our evil ways and do that which is good; and as every man is a free agent, consequently has a free will whether he will be virtuous or not, and receive the reward of his virtue or be punished for his disobedience.

§ That is by following the doctrines of Christ, which teach us to do that which is right.

As the above is a doctrine no one can disprove, I shall now enquire of what benefit to mankind is water baptism.

Water baptism was first introduced by John among the Christians, typical of the doctrine that was about to be promulgated amongst them. At the time of John men were prone to outward ceremonies, he in consequence introduced the new doctrine that was to be promulgated by Christ under the emblematical figure of baptism: "*I indeed baptize you unto repentance,*" that is, the mind and actions must be freed from corruption, and as pure in the sight of God, as the body is washed clean by water. In the appearance of Christ, as a teacher of morality, the assertion of John was verified, "*I indeed baptize you unto repentance, but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unlose, he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.*" For he, by the sublime precepts he preached to the people, inforces the practice of good works which can make men happy. As baptism was typical of the practical truths that he afterwards taught to men, and as these truths are universally disseminated in different nations we have no more use for water baptism. So perfectly convinced was St. Paul of this that, in his epistle to the Corinthians, he thus rejoices that he had baptized so few: "*I thank God I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, &c. for Christ sent me not to baptize but to preach the gospel;*" that is, the rule whereby we may be saved. By this declaration of Paul we are convinced that baptism was only a shadow to pave the way of what followed, which was to *work a personal change in their conduct,* and as

we now possess the precept, their prototype ought to vanish as it is of no more use to salvation, than in believing in the infallibility of the Roman see. As baptism and all the outward ceremonies is not christianity, nor is the ceremonies of the Jews, Brachmens, or Mahometans pure religion, but the vital principle of each, that are the same and will save all men, if they live up to their respective dictates. Strip all religious systems of their absurdities, and we shall find a portion of good sufficient to gain the favour of the First Former of Nature; it is only in the outward ceremonies they differ, invented by men to gain power and dominion over their fellow creatures.

As baptism is only typical of the divinity of Christ, whose moral lessons he infused into the minds of the people, by which means he was enabled to work a personal change* in their

* "Mankind in general were grossly corrupted both with respect to their understandings, their affections, and actions, when our Lord undertook to reform them, and this rendered each one personally displeasing to his Maker, as each one was become the proper object of his dislike. Every one who had behaved grossly unworthy of, and unsuitable to his character, and who had thereby disappointed the very being and end of his creation; did by this means render himself personally displeasing to his Maker and the proper object of his resentment. For as man is a free Being, who has the direction of his own actions, as he is endowed with discerning and reasoning faculties, which, when carefully used and attended to, *would in general rightly direct his understanding, his affections, and actions*; (excepting in difficult cases, in which he would be liable to err, and consequently to act wrong, and which wrong behaviour his kind Creator would not unreasonably take an advantage from) so this puts it in every man's power, and leaves it to his own choice to behave well or ill; to render himself personally pleasing or displeasing to God; and consequently to be the proper objects of Divine

actions and was rendered a saviour to them. It was this alone that made Christ a saviour, and caused him to be worshipped as such, as we know this to be the direct meaning of the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost. I again repeat, that we ought to consider water baptism under no other light than emblematical of the

favour and resentment; and as the generality, or at least a great part, of our species had made a *wrong* choice, had by their ill behaviour rendered themselves personally displeasing to their Maker, and by that means were become the proper objects of his resentment: so there was no other possible way in which Christ could be a saviour to them, but by his working a personal change in them, or rather by his recommending such momentous truths to their consideration as, when seriously attended to, would dispose and engage them to reform themselves, and work in them such a change as would make them cease to be the proper objects of Divine dislike and resentment, and become personally pleasing to God by being thereby the proper object of his favour. I say this was the only possible way in which Christ could be a saviour to mankind; because this was the only possible way in which he could render men personally pleasing to their Maker, and the proper object of his Divine regard. It was mens vicious and wicked behaviour *only* which rendered them personally displeasing to God, and which made them the proper objects of his resentment; and therefore there was nothing in nature but mens *reformation* and their right *behaviour* which could possible render them personally pleasing to him, and make them the proper objects of his favour. God is eternally and unchangeably the same; he always likes or dislikes as the Being which is liked or disliked is in itself the proper object of the one or the other. So that, if there be at any time a *change* with respect to the Divine *approbation* or dislike, the grounds of that change is not nor cannot be in God, who is unchangeable; and therefore must be in the subject upon whom it is exercised; that is, if God at any time ceases to disapprove, the Being which he did disapprove and likes the same Being which before he disliked; then that Being must be so *changed* as to cease to be the proper object of his approbation and affection. So that if we have by our misbehaviour rendered ourselves personally

saving power of Christ; and under this impression every man ought to consider every other man in equal favour with the Deity, let him profess what religion he may.

As toleration,* in religious opinions, is a virtue which ought to be particularly cherished

displeasing to God, and are become the proper objects of his dislike and resentment, we must unavoidably continue to be personally displeasing to him, and to be the proper objects of his dislike and resentment until such a change is wrought in us, which is done by our *repentance* and *reformation*, as that we cease to be the proper objects of his dislike and resentment, and become the proper objects of his approbation and affection. I say, this must needs be the case; because were God to like or dislike upon any other ground it would be manifestly wrong, and therefore the supposition is not to be admitted. Were God to take up resentment against any of his creatures upon any other grounds than their having behaved ill, which is the only proper ground for resentment, this would be wrong; or were he to shew mercy to and forgive such transgressors, as had rendered themselves the proper objects of his resentment, upon any other grounds than their repentance and reformation, which in such a case, would be the only proper ground for mercy and forgiveness, this would be wrong also; and therefore it is not to be supposed. If then our Lord Jesus Christ would be a saviour to mankind, he must *reform* them and must rightly direct their *minds* and *lives*, because there is no other possible way in which he could render them personally pleasing to God, and consequently no other possible way in which he could be a saviour to them." Chubb on the True Gospel of Jesus Christ.

* The reader would do well to study "A Letter on Toleration, by JOHN LOCKE Gent." and his essay on the "Human Understanding," also this correct and philosophical view of the subject: "Universal toleration is the most effectual towards amalgamating the different sects and communities in one civil community, and forming an homogeneous mass of those particles of the social body which, without this pervading principle, would always repel each other. Since all cannot be expected to think alike, especially on the mysterious and metaphysical subject of religion, the only rule of concord is *mutually to agree to differ;*

by every Christian. I shall give him a transcrip from the Brachmans scriptures upon that subject, to show their liberal principles to all those who differ in opinion from them,

"Some with offerings direct their worship unto God in the fire; others sacrifice their ears and other organs in the fire of constraint; whilst some sacrifice sound and the like in the fire of their organs. Some again sacrifice the action of all their organs and faculties in the fire of self-constraint, lighted up by the spirit of inspired wisdom. There are also the worshippers with offerings, and the worshippers with mortification; and, again, the worshippers with enthusiastic devotion; so there are those, the wisdom of whose reading is their worship, men of subdued passions, and severe manners. Some there are who sacrifice their breathing spirit, and force it downwards from its natural course; whilst others force the spirit which is below

and it is well remarked that he who *values his own freedom* ought to *teach himself to respect* that of other men. If our opinions strike us as true and important, we ought to recollect that our neighbour's opinions present themselves to him exactly in the same light; and that if it be allowed to judge of truth for others, and to insist it either by force or (which is nearly the same thing) by civil influence, the spirit of persecution must prevail, as at the best a large portion of the community will feel all the mortification which results from a restricted and irrtiating sufferance, when it is *partial* toleration conveys the humbling idea of being endured; and it implies a *censure*. *Universal* toleration alone can put all religions on a par in the contemplation of the magistrate, or afford that degree of religious which is compatiable with civil liberty. *Liberty is not the exclusive property of a sect but the inheritance of man, the property of nations: it belongs not to this or that religion, but to all times, to all places, and to all countries.*"—Monthly review, Vol. LIX. page 445.

back with the breath; and a few, with whom the two faculties are held in great esteem, close up the door of each; and there are some, who eat but by rule, who sacrifice their lives in their lives. *All these different kinds of worshippers are, by their particular modes of worship, purified from their offences.*" Wilkin's Bhagvat Geeta, Lecture 4.

It also informs us that "mankind are led astray by their reason being obscured by ignorance; but when that ignorance of their souls is destroyed and the force of reason, their wisdom shineth forth again with the glory of the sun, and causeth the Deity to appear. Those whose understanding is in him, whose souls are in him, whose confidence is in him, and whose asylum is in him, are by wisdom purified from all the offences and go from whence they shall never return." Lecture 5.

To make us perfect in the sight of God, and to secure repose hereafter, it is that the study of wisdom is necessary. "Wisdom is free from self-esteem, hypocrisy, and injury; patience, rectitude, respect for masters and teachers, charity, and steadiness, self-constraint, disaffection for the objects of the senses, freedom from pride, and a constant attention to birth, death, decay, sickness, pain and defects; exemption from attachments and affection for children, wife, and home; a constant evenness of temper upon the arrival of every event, whether longed for or not; a constant and invariable worship paid to me alone; worshipping in a private place, and a dislike to the society of man; a constant study of the superior spirit; and the inspection of the advantage to be derived from a knowledge of the first principle." Lecture 13.

After we have acquired wisdom, we shall then be at peace. "Supreme happiness attendeth the man whose mind is thus at peace; whose carnal affections and passions are thus subdued; who is thus in God and free from sin. The man who is thus constantly in the exercise of the soul and free from sin, enjoys the eternal happiness." Lecture 6.

As there is but one principle of action that is to be pursued through life to secure happiness; which is the essence of all principles of religious systems in the world, we ought to be universally charitable to each other, and not condemn any one upon his opinions of theology, but address the Almighty God in the following *oraison: "O thou who art all in all, infinite is thy power and glory! Thou includest all things, wherefore thou art all things!" "Thou art all things animate and inanimate; thou art the sage instructor of the whole, worthy to be adored," "For thou shouldest bear with me even as a father with his son, a friend with his friend, a lover with his beloved. I am well pleased with having beheld things before never seen; yet my mind is overwhelmed with awful fear. Have mercy then O heavenly Lord, O mansion of the universe!"* Lecture 11, Wilkin's Bhagvat Geeta.

NOTES

ON THE AGE OF THE WORLD.

ADDRESS,

THE received age of the world is so contracted a space in the immensity of TIME, that the author thought it little accorded with the omnipotence of an Almighty cause. In perusing various works he collected the following NOTES, which are presented to the contemplation of the public.

NOTES, &c.

" By inclination and by habits of research I never believe any thing upon the vague report of others. Before I give assent to any proposition, it is a maxim with me to examine the subject pro. et con., *then assent or dissent according to the impression that examination has made on my mind."*

THE age of the world is a subject that has excited the attention of the literati of all nations; and, I believe, that no subject is under more uncertainty. Some contend that the world existed longer than that fixed by the Hebrew chronologists many thousands of years, and even others would wish us to believe that it existed from all eternity. Which ever be the truth I shall not presume to determine, but only transcribe a few notes that have occured in my miscellaneous reading, so that, when the reader has the scattered transcripts before him, he may then draw what conclusions he thinks proper.

The learned Chronologe Usher, who calculated by the Hebrew text. The world was created before Christ 4004 years.

The Septuagint, which is a translation from

that of the Hebrew, fixes that period at 5872 years.

The Samaritan is 4700 years.

How discordant are these calculations; and how inconsistant is it to suppose that those accounts are the only true of the age of the world.

"As to the records or registers of men, we must confess that those guides are not always infallible, nor do they afford mathematical demonstrations. In fact, with regard to history in general, and ancient history in particular, something must be left to conjecture and historic faith. It would be an offence against common probity, were we to pass over in silence those objections which authors of the greatest reputation have made against the absolute certainty of chronology. Indeed the prodigious difference between the Septuagint Bible and the Vulgate, in point of chronology, occasions an embarrassment, which is the more difficult to avoid, as we cannot positively say on which side the error lies. The Greek Bible counts, for example, from the creation of the world to the birth of Abraham, 1500 years more than the Hebrew and Latin Bibles, &c. How difficult it is, likewise, to ascertain the years of the judges of the Jewish nations, in the Bible? What darkness is spread over the succession of the kings of Judah and Israel? that the scriptures never marks if they are current or complete years: for we cannot suppose that a patriarch, judge, or king, lived exactly 60, 90, 180, or 969 years, without any odd months or days. The different names also that the Assyrians, Egyptians, Persians, and Greeks, have given to the same prince, have contributed not a little to embarrass ancient chronology. If we

did not know that Nabucodonosor, Nabucodrosor, and Nabucolassar, were the same name, or the name of the same person, we should scarcely believe it. Sargon is Sennacherib, Ozias is Azarias, &c." "In truth, there remains but few monuments of the first monarchs of the world. Numberless books have been lost, and those which have come down to us are mutilated or altered by transcribers. The Greeks began to write very late; and *Heredotus*, their first historian, was credulous. The Greeks were in general vain and partial; and the Romans were still more infatuated with notions of their own merit and grandeur. The eras, the years, the periods, the epochs, were not the same in each nation; and they moreover began at different periods of the year. All this contributed to throw still more obscurity over chronology. Christianity itself had subsisted near 1200 years before it was known precisely how many years had passed since the birth of our saviour. They saw clearly that the vulgar era was defective, but it was along time before they could comprehend that it required four whole years to make up the true period. They count 132 contrary opinions of different authors concerning the year in which the Messiah appeared on the earth. Mr. Vallemont names 64 of them, all celebrated writers." Encycolpædia Londinenis, Vol. iv. page 539.

I shall now quote some evidence that the globe is older than that fixed by the scriptures.

"Mr. Dupuis,* who, in his learned memoir concerning the origin of the constellations, has assigned many plausible reasons to prove that

* Origine de tous les cultes, tome iii. p. 324, & suiv.

Libra was formerly the sign of the vernal, and *Aries* of the nocturnal equinox: that is, that since the origin of the actual astronomical system, the procession of the equinoxes has carried forward by seven signs, the primitive order of the zodiac. Now estimating the procession at about 70 years and a half to a degree, that is 2115 years to each sign; and observing that *Aries* was in the fifteenth degree, 1447 years before Christ, it follows, that the first degree of Libra could not have coincided with the vernal equinox more lately than 15194 years before Christ, to which if you add 1790 years since Christ, it appears that 16984 have elapsed since the origin of the zodiac. The vernal equinox coincided with the first degree of Aries, 2504 years before Christ, and with the first degree of Taurus, 4619 years before Christ. Now it is to be observed, that the worship of the bull is the principle article in the theological creed of the Egyptians, Persians, Japanese, &c. from whence it clearly follows that some great revolution took place among those nations at that time. The chronology of five or six thousand years in Genesis is little agreeable to this hypothesis; but as the book of Genesis cannot claim to be considered as a history further back than Abraham, we are at liberty to make what arrangements we please in the eternity that preceded." Volney's Ruins, page 291, 292.

"* There is another fact no less singular: I mean a tradition which the Indians have preserved, of two stars diametrically opposite, which perform their revolution round the earth in a hundred and forty-four years. This tra-

* Bailly's Letter on the Atlantis of Plato, Vol. i. p. 212.

dition, no doubt, had its origin. How great soever the ignorance of the people, they could not possibly have had in their eye the revolutions of any of the planets. As to the motion of the stars along the ecliptic, it was, no doubt, long unknown; but from the moment of its discovery, its slowness could not admit of mens' giving it so speedy a revolution; nor could the Indians be misled by this motion, which they know, and which is completed, according to them, in twenty-four thousand years. It must be presumed then, that those hundred and forty-four years were not solar; and that, by this term, we are to understand some longer period, agreeable to the usage of the ancients, who had a Geneical name to express every kind of revolution. Now we find among the Tartars a period of a hundred and eighty years, which they call *Van;* a hundred and forty-four times a hundred and eighty years, make exactly twenty-five thousand nine hundred and twenty years. This is the true revolution of the fixed stars, as deduced from the most accurate of our modern observations, chance never produces resemblances like these. Besides the word *Van* as nothing strange in it in India; it is found in that language of *Siam,* and signifies a day, that is to say a revolution;* we may, therefore, conclude that the Indians, previously to the knowledge they have at present of the motion of the fixed stars, had another system on the same subject more exact, which is lost in the obscurity of their traditions; and that those traditions belong to their origin, to the country where the period of a hundred and eighty years is still in

* History of Gen. des Voy, tom. xxxiv. p. 360.

use to the country, in fine, whence the word *Van* passed into their language."

"The *Hindoos, as well as the Chinese, have ever laid claim to an antiquity infinitely more remote than is authorised by the belief of the rest of mankind. It is certain, however, that these two nations have been acquainted with letters from the very earliest period, and that their annals have never been disturbed or destroyed by any known revolution; and though we may come to the perusal of their records, armed with every argument, and fortified even to prejudice, against the admission of their pretensions, at the same time placing the most implicit reliance upon the Mosaic chronology as generally received, yet their plausible accounts of those remote ages, and their undeviating confidence in their own assertions, never can fail to make some impression upon us, in proportion as we gain a clear insight to them. Suspicions of a like nature are not totally without foundation even in the western world, and the conscientious scruples of the historiographer of Mount Etna (as mentioned in a late publication†) will always be of some weight in the scale of philosophy.

"The Hindoos then reckon the duration of the world by form of ages or distinct ages.

1st, "The Suttee Jague (or age of purity) is said to have lasted 3,200,000 years; and they hold that the life of man was in that age extended to 100,000 years, and that his stature was 21 cubits.

* Preface to the Translation of the Code of Gentoo Laws, translated from the Shanscrit Language, &c. by Halhed, 8vo. xxxvi.

† Brydon's Letters.

2nd, "The Tirtāh Jogue (or age in which one-third of mankind were reprobate) they suppose to have consisted of 2,400,000 years, and that men then lived to the age of 10,000 years.

3d, "The Dwāpāār Jogue (in which half of the human race became depraved) endured 1,600,000 years; and men's lives were reduced to 1000 years.

4th, "The Collee Jogue (in which all mankind are corrupted, or rather lessened, for that is the true meaning of Collee) is the present era, which they suppose ordained to subsist for 400,000 years, of which near 5000 years are already past; and man's life, in this period, is limitted to 100 years.

"Computation is lost, and conjecture overwhelmed in the attempt to adjust such astonishing spaces of time to our own confined notions of the world's epoch: to such antiquity the Mosaic creation is but as yesterday; and to such ages the life of Methuselah is no more than a span! Absurd as this Gentoo doctrine may seem, mere human reason, upon consideration of the present contracted measure of mortality, can no more reconcile to itself the idea of patriarchal than of braminical longevity; and when the line of implicit faith is once extended, we can never ascertain the precise limits beyond which it must not pass. One circumstance must not be omitted, that the ages allotted to mankind in the several Jogues by the Bramins, tally very exactly with those mentioned by Moses, as far as the chronology of the latter reaches: for the last part of the Dwāpāār Jogue, in which men are said to have attained to one thousand years of life, corresponds with the Mosaic era of the Antediluvians; and in the commencement of the

Collee Joque, which comes near to the period of the deluge, the portion of human existence was contracted to one hundred years, and is seldom supposed to go so far.

"We are not much advanced in our inquiries, by allowing, with some excellent authors, that most of the Gentoo Shasters (or scriptures) were composed about the beginning of the Collee Jogue; for then we at once come to the immediate æra of the flood, which calamity is never once mentioned in those Shasters, and which yet we must think infinitely too remarkable to have been even but slightly spoken of, much less to have been totally omitted, had it been known in that part of the world. The Bramins indeed remove this objection by two assertions; one, that all their scriptures were written before the time by us allotted to Noah; the other, that the deluge really never took place in Hindostan.

"But to wave those vague and indefinite disquisitions, it will not here be superfluous to quote a passage or two from some of the most classical and authentic Shasters, which expressly determine and fix the dates of their respective æras to the earliest Jogues.

"The first specimen here inserted is from the book of Munnoo, which the reader will observe stands foremost in the list of those which furnished the subsequent code; and though the second quotation is not so authorative, as being the production of a later author, (whose name we do not recollect,) in testimony of the date of another, yet Jage Bulk is mentioned among the first legislators, and his books are valued for their antiquity as well as their excellence.

"'When * ten thousand and ten years of the Suttee Jogue were past, on the night of the full moon, in the month of Bhadun, I Munnoo, at the command of Bremā, finished this Shaster, that speaks of men's duty, of justice, and of religion, ever instructive.'

"'This treatise, called Munnoo Smistee, will enlighten the world like a torch.'

"In the Tirtāh Jogue, the Jage Bulk, when ninety-five years was past, in the month of Sāwun, on the moon's increase, on Wednesday, (or literally on the day of Mercury,) finished this treatise, called Jage Bulk, which sets forth the office of religion, and also informs men of the duties of the magistrate."

The following tabular view will inform us of the respective eras:

7,205,000	years since the creation
7,194,990	——— *Munnoo's* book was written
4,005,000	——— *Tirtāh Jogue* commenced
4,004,905	——— Jage Bulk was written
1,605,000	——— Dwāpāā Jogue commenced
5,000	——— Collee Jogue commenced
395,000	—— yet to come.

"What period shall we possibly assign to those writers, if we disallow the authorities here quoted? If they are false, there must have been a time when the imposition would have been too palpable to have passed upon mankind, and when the concurrent testimony of the whole world would have risen up in judgement against it; for if we grant Munnoo's works to

* I have here only given the translation of the extracts which I thought would suffice; if not the reader may see the original Shaushreet extracts in the book from which this is taken.

have been published during his own lifetime, it is impossible that he should have ventured to utter so monstrous a forgery; and if they were concealed till after his death, could the memory of his late existence be so shortly obliterated through the whole country? But supposing so much of the book as relates to the date to have been foisted in by another, and afterwards produced as a part of the original text, which till that time had laid undiscovered, nobody surely would have believed him in opposition to the universal faith! for so miraculous a fiction could never gain credit but upon the support of some principle of religious opinion, and every religion has established a chronology of its own; besides can it be possible, that none of Munnoo's contemporaries, none of the succeeding writers should have recorded so striking a circumstance? For if the whole Indian world had till that time believed with us in a chronology nearly answering to that of Moses, so astonishing a change in their sentiments upon the introduction of the doctrine of the Jogues, would have furnished ample matter for a thousand volumes; but, on the contrary, all the parts of every Shaster (however different from every other on religious subjects) are yet uniform and consistent throughout upon this; the same mode of computing the annals has always obtained, and the same belief of the remoteness or antiquity that now prevails may be proved to have been universally acknowledged, even at the time in which some pretend to fix the appearance of letters in Hindostan.

"Rajah Prichutt, who though ranked as a modern on the records of India, is yet known

to have lived in the earliest ages of the Collee Jogue, was no less anxious than modern philosophers are to pierce through the obscurity of time, and to trace the progress of the world from its infancy; at his instigation a work was composed by Shŭkeh Diew, a learned Bramin, (son of Bëass, the famous author of the Mahābāret,) containing the history of India through the three preceding Jogues, with the succession of the several Rajahs, and the duration of their reigns. This curious history, called *Shree Bhagbut*, still subsists, divided into twelve ascund or books, (literally branches) and three thousand and twenty chapters. What shall we say to a work composed four thousand years ago, and from thence tracing mankind upwards through several millions of years? Must we answer, that the earth was at that time an uninhabited marsh, still slowly emerging from an universal inundation."

Sir William Jones, in his various oriental works, says, that the Hindoo periods agree with the Mosaic; this assertion is quite different from Halhed's before quoted; he probably, like many of our learned, will not allow any chronology to be correct that gives the creation sooner than the period assigned by Moses. It is a misfortune that the language*, in which these records are preserved, should be so difficult, that it requires a large portion of a man's life to be able to peruse them in their original tongues; and a

* Any of my readers that would wish to study the original language, the Sănskrĕĕt; I have the pleasure to inform him that CHARLES WILKINS, L.L. D. F. R. S. has published a grammar of the Sanskaita language, 8vo. 1808. CAREY, a Missionary, has published one under this title, "Sungskrit Grammar, with Examples, for the Exercise of the Students,

still greater, that so many should be so prejudiced in their first impressions of education as to make them discard every authority that does not coincide with that they have been taught to believe.—There is one remarkable circumstance that Sir William Jones, nor any other oriental scholar, has ever confuted, the authorities Halhed has quoted. Butler, in his Horæ Biblicæ, says, that "it is impossible not to wish that the facts upon which, on this, and on other occasions, he (Sir William Jones,) builds his pretensions, were established with more certainty, and that the conclusions he deduces from them were supported by inferences." Vol. ii. page 174.

"Great surely, and inexplicable must be the doubts of mere human reason upon such a dilemma, when unassisted and uninformed by Divine revelation:—Yet, from the premises already established, this conclusion at least may fairly be deduced, that the world does not now contain annals of more indisputable antiquity than those delivered down by the ancient Bramins." Halhed p. xiii.

and complete List of the Dhatoes or Roots, by WILLIAM CAREY, Teacher of the Sungskrit, Bangalle, and Marhatta Languages, in the College at Fort William," 8vo. Also, Mr. COLEBROOKE has printed part of one he is translating from a Native Grammar, intitled *Saraserata*, and is much esteemed in India.

A

CATALOGUE

OF THE SCRIPTURES OF DIFFERENT NATIONS.

I SHALL subjoin a catalogue of the translation of the scriptures of different nations, that if the reader should be curious to examine the works themselves, he will have an opportunity to order them by their proper names.

I think it advisable to do so; as a careful perusal will convince the unprejudiced reader that the vital principle of all branches of religious systems tend to one point, *To make men virtuous.* As long as this great end is accomplished, by adhering to the precepts they inculcate, it is a matter of indifference what theological system we follow; consequently it is our duty and, I may say, the first principle of our virtue, to look upon every man in every nation as a brother; children of one parent and formed by an omnipotent power.

CHINESE.

The *Chi-King* is a collection of poems on different subjects; a translation of it in French was made by Father *Gaubil,* and published by *M. de Guignes,* in 1770.

The above work was originally compiled by *Confucius,* from ancient fragments of sacred books in his time.—An English translation is much wanted.

HINDUSTAN.

The *Vedas* are the foundation of the opinions of the Bramins, written in the Sanscrit, a language that is considered the most copious that have come under notice;—a complete copy of it is deposited in the British Museum by *Colonel Polier.*

Mr. Halhed has made, through the medium of a Persian translation, a literal verson and is deposited likewise in the British Museum. Why is it not published? As I am assured that it would be as valuable a present to the republic of letters as any work that ever was produced.

An extract from them has been published in France, by *M. Anquetil due Perron, "Oupnekat," (id est Secretum Tegendum) "opus ipsa in India rarissimum, continens antiquam et arcanam seu teologicam et philosophicam doctrinam e quatuor sacris indorum libris, Rak Beid, Dejejr Beid, Sam Beid, Aithrban Beid, excerptam, ad verbum, ex Persico idiomate Sanskreticis vocabulis intermixto, in Latinum conversum, dissertationibus et annotationibus difficiliora explanantibus illustratumstudis et*

opera Anquetil du Perron, Indicopleustæ. Tome i. *and* ii. 4to. *Argentorati et Parisiis.*"

Several sacred works and comments on the *Vedas* have been translated, the following is selected:

"*Institutes of Menu,*" was translated by Sir William Jones, and is published in his works.

Dr. Charles Wilkins, author of a Sănshrĕĕt *grammar, has translated the following* "Băguăt-Gēētā or Dialogues of Krĕĕshnă and Aĭjŏŏn, in eighteen Lectures, with notes," 4to 1785.

"Hĕĕtōpădēs of Vĕĕshuŏŏ-Sărmā,". *is a series of connected tables, interspersed with moral, prudential, and political maxims, with notes,*" 8vo. 1788.

A compilation was made at Fort William, in Calcutta, by learned Bramins, of a "*Code of Gentoo Laws*" in the Sanscrit language, was translated into the Persian and afterwards translated into English, by Mr. Halhed, and published in 1777, in 4to. and 8vo. with this title "A *code of Gentoo Laws; or Ordinations of the Pundits, from a Persian translation, made from the original, and written in the Sanscrit language,*" *London.*

Summary of the *Pourans* have been published in London under this title, "*Ancient Indian Literature, illustrative of the Researches of the Asiatic Society, instituted in Bengal, January* 15, 1804, *from original* MSS." 4to.

No. 1, was published in 1807, containing a summary of the *Sheeve Pouran, with extracts and epitomes.*

PERSIA.

Zend-Avasta, the living word, is the code of

law promulgated by Zoraster, translated from the *Pahlavi*, (which is supposed to be a corruption of the Sanscrit and the language common at the time of Zoraster,) and it was published under this title, "Zend-Avesta Ouvrage de Zoroastre contenant les Idees Theologiques, Physiques et Morales dece Legiflateur; les Cérémonies du Culte Religieux qu'il a etabli, et plusieurs traités important relatifs a l'Ancienne Histoire des Perses. Traduit en François sur l'original Zend; avec des Remarques et accompagné de plusieurs Traites propres a eclaircir les Matieres, qui en sont l'Objet." 2 vols. 4to. at Paris, 1771.

ARABIA.

The scriptures of the Mahometans has been translated by various people, but the best is by Mr. Sale, with the following title, "*The Koran, commonly called the* Alcoran of Mahommed, *translated from the original Arabic, with explanatory notes, taken from the most approved commentators, to which is prefixed a preliminary discourse, by George Sale, Gent.*" 4to. and in two vols. 8vo. 1801.

SANDINAVIA.

The mythology of the *Sandinavia* and *Northern Europe*, was collected by Sæmund, about the year 1090. Various editions have been published. An English translation was printed by A. S. Cattle, in 8vo 1797.

The above are most of the translations that has been published of the original branches of theology: our scriptures excepted.

It would be a desirable object if some learned gentleman would undertake to select the sublime law and moral precept from these writings that they might be brought to the comprehension of all. By which means the sterling value of the whole would be then compressed into a moderate compass, and would be highly advantageous to all classes of society. In the mean time, till such a work is presented to the British public, I beg leave to draw the attention of my readers to two small works published by Dodsley.

"Miscellaneous Pieces relating to the Chinese, 2 vols. 12mo. 1762." The Chinese rules of conduct, inserted in the first volume page 43 to 98, is what I particularly recommend: and "Dodsley's Economy of Human Life." These two small works contain *complete rules of action,* and if we adhere to them, it will insure us happiness here and hereafter.

FINIS.

Thomas & Hunsley, Printers, Doncaster.

APPENDIX.

SINCE writing the preceding tract, I have had numerous occasions to examine writings which are but little attended to by readers in general; the result of my inquiries are added as an Appendix to what I had previously written.

Note (A) page 14.—The proper titles are as follows, taken from Dr. Clark's Bibliographical Dictionary, the originals I have not yet been able to procure.

"*Tela Ignea Satanæ, &c. opera Jo. Christ. Wagenseilii.* 4to. *Altdorphi Noricorum*, 1681, 2 vols. This is a collection of Jewish blasphemies written against Christ, and the christian religion, with their refutation. It is a scarce and curious work."—Dr. Clarke.

The "*Toldoth Yeschu*," which is contained in the above work, is universally known and read by the Jews; in fact, their children are taught it like nursery tales, and thence imbibe that inveterate prejudice against the historical relations of the gospels.

Voltair, in his Philosophical Dictionary, gives the following analysis: This work has "a most shocking history of the life of our Saviour, forged with the utmost falsity and malice; for instance, they have dared to write that one Panther, or Pandera, who dwelt at Bethlehem, seduced a young woman, married to Jochaman, and the fruit of this foul commerce was a child, whom they named Jesus or Jesu. The father, being obliged to fly the place, withdrew to Babylon. As for young Jesus, he was sent to school; but," adds the author, "he had the insolence to raise his head and uncover himself before the priests, contrary to the usage, which was to appear in their presence with the head hanging down and the face covered, a petulance for which he received a smart check; this occasioning an inquiry into his birth, it was consequently found to be impure, and he became exposed to public ignominy."

2. "*Historia Jeschuæ Nazareni. Hebraicè et Latinè cum notis Jo. Jac Hulderici, Lugd. Bat.* 1705. 8vo."

Hulderic was a German protestant divine, and author of the above life of Christ, according to the Jewish accounts, from Hebrew MSS. He died in 1731 This account of Jesus is more consonant with the evangelical history of our Saviour, but swarms with the grossest anachronisms and errors. He makes Christ to have been born and have died under Herod the Great; and affirms, that the complaint of Panther's adultery with Mary, the mother of Jesus, was brought before that prince.

3. To the above may be added, "*Angeel. Iltifwalet. Evangelium Infantiæ vel liber Apocryphus De Infantia Servatoris ex MS. to edidit, et Latina versione et notis illustravit. Henricus Sike*, 12mo. Arab. et Lat. Jraj. ad Rheu, 1697. This is a curious work, but shockingly absurd. It pretends to give an account of the conduct of Christ from his birth, till the time he and his parents came from Egypt and settled at Nazareth. It is certainly a very ancient piece of religious imposture. *Tremus*, in Lib. i.

Cap. 17. Adversus Hæreses, has a long quotation from it: and it is condemned by *name* in the council of Rome, held by *Gelasius*, about the end of the fifth century. The book is very scarce, and is read more for the sake of the learned notes of *Sike*, than for any useful information which can be gained from it."

Note (B).—" I will now proceed to show you, that Jesus Christ was never held to be any thing but a man, for two or three centuries after his death, and that not till the Romish religion, *with all its vices*, was engrafted into the sect of Christians; and when that religion became the orthodox or predominant religion, it enforced the divinity of Christ, as well as the incarnation and transubstantiation, upon the world. Supported by weak emperors, they spared neither the sword, nor fire, nor faggot, to make it go down, and which they have continued till within the last century. It is acknowledged by all the ancient fathers of the church, that, from the very first separation of the disciples, disputes, factions, and schisms arose among them, which to me appears impossible to have happened if this founder was a god, or even believed to be the son of God; for in either case their certainty of his divinity would have held them in unity—but so it happened; each set up a system of his own, and had writings called evangelical, of his own creed, or what he was pleased to record as the words of his master; but all of them adopted the name of Christians, and were equally interested in the glory of their founder, and most of the chiefs or leaders of the sects had known and seen Jesus Christ. Now among those ancient witnesses, there were many who made profession, and looked upon as false, the doctrine which we find is taught in those evangelists which remain with us at present; and the traditions which they left, are quite contrary to those which we have read in our holy scriptures. In proof of which, I will give you the following very short account, and will defy its being controverted.

" 1st. The Gnostics, who were so ancient as to be believed by the first fathers to be known to St. Paul, agree one and all in denying what St. John says, that the word became flesh. They say that God or Christ appeared upon earth without incarnation, without being born of a virgin, without having any body but in appearance, without any real suffering, and, consequently, without any resurrection.*

" 2nd. Cerinthus was of the same opinion; and maintained that it was impossible that he could be born of a virgin. They did not doubt that Joseph was his real father; they denied the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and said he would only rise at the general resurrection with the rest of mankind.†

" 3rd. The Ebionites most firmly believed that Joseph was the real father of Christ.‡

" 4th. Symmaticus, who embraced that sect, wrote against the genealogy which St. Matthew has given of Jesus Christ. Basilide said, that Jesus was not incarnated, but was only covered with the appearance of man; that at the time of the passion he had taken the appearance of St. Simon the Cirenian, and gave him his.§

" 5th. The Carpocratians‖ believed that Jesus Christ was got by Joseph, and that he was like other men. Some among them made no scruple of saying, they equalled him in goodness, and even that they surpassed him. They did not admit of the resurrection of the body.

" 6th. The Cainists,** conformable in these respects to the opinions

* Tillemont, vol. ii. p. 5.
† St. Ireneus, book 1, chap. 26, No. 1, pp. 11. St. Epiphanius, hom. 28, p. 110.
‡ Tillemont, vol. iv. page 108.
§ Tillemont, vol. ii. page 221. Epiphanius, hom. 21, p. 70, 71. Theodoret. Hæreticorum Fabularum, book 1, page 195.
‖ Tillemont, vol. ii. p. 257. Ireneus, book 1, chap. 25.
** Tillemont, vol. ii. p. 47.

of the others, spoke also of the law of Moses with the utmost contempt: they assured us, that it had for a first principle a bad intelligence, and they did not believe Jesus Christ came to accomplish any thing, but was merely a man of great virtue and goodness.

"7th. Marcion* taught that our evangelists were full of falsehoods, and that they the Marcionists were more perfect and true than those who had left us in their writings, the history of Jesus Christ. *Semetipsum esse veraciorem quam sunt hi qui tradiderunt evangelium apostoli, suasit discipulis suis; non evangelium sed evangelii particulam tradens eis.* In this manner speaks St. Ireneus, vol. i. p. 306.

"8th. The Aloges,† Theodores, and Theodotians, rejected with contempt the evangelists, particularly St. John; they spoke of them as a work of lies.

"9th. The Valentinians' evangeligal writings were quite different from those we have at present. *Ut nec evangelium quidem sit apud eos sine blasphemiâ*, says St. Ireneus, book 3, chap. 11. p. 192.

"In short, the ancient Christians maintained that the evangelists (that is the sacred writings) ought to be often corrected and revised. *Se esse emendatores apostolorum.* It is in this manner St. Ireneus speaks of them, book 3, p. 174.

"Behold here a prodigious number of the first Christians, who declare, that what is in our evangelists is contrary to historical truth, and who combat and oppose, among other articles, the two most capital points of the Catholic faith—that Jesus Christ was born in a different manner, or by different means, from the rest of mankind; and that he was raised from the dead, or the resurrection.

"You will please to remark, that those witnesses, who declare against the creeds and belief of the present day (or as we at present are instructed to believe) were either contemporary with the apostles, as the Gnostics, the Essenians, the Ebionites, and Cerinthians, or had their history of Jesus Christ, from those who had been perfectly instructed. For Basilide,‡ had for his master or instructor Glaucia, the disciple and interpreter of St. Peter; and Valentine had been brought up by Theodat, the disciple of St. Paul.

"Another very considerable difficulty occurs against our evangelists, which is that our most ancient fathers, even among the ruling sect, never knew, or heard, of the four scriptures or evangelists that remain among us Christians; whilst they cite frequently, and with the greatest belief and entire confidence, the apocryphal books as their greatest proofs and authority.

"Note, that every book, writing, or tradition, that did not square or agree with the system of religion which the orthodox (the Roman Catholic) were then forming, were deemed apocryphal: that is to say, spurious.

"I will now decline any further proof of the invalidity of the four evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; as I think, and with the greatest sincerity hope, I have said already enough to convince you, that they were imposed upon us, by that whore of Babylon (as she is called) the church of Rome. However, I will just state by what further evidence I could prove their invalidity—by St. Clement of Alexandria; by Julius Cassion, an author of the second century; by St Ignatius; by Eusebius; by St. Jerome, and every father of the church till Justin Martyr, who was the first that mentions them. From Justin, till the time of St. Clement, they were cited, or spoke of, with the rest. At length being properly purged, to the liking of the *orthodox*, they totally expelled

* Epiphanius, hom. 42, p. 309.
† Tillemont, vol ii. p. 438. St. Epiphanius, hom. 34, p. 472 and 463. No. 5, p. 424.
‡ St. Clement of Alexandria, book 7. p. 761.

and eclipsed the others; not but there were some who in succeeding times have placed their confidence in them.

"It is a thing worthy of remark and great attention, that although the first fathers of the church make frequent use and mention of the (now called) false evangelists, never did any of them once mention those which remain with us. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, are neither cited by St. Barnaby, nor by St. Clement, nor by St. Ignatius, nor in short by any of the writers of the first centuries. St. Justin is the first who had any knowledge of those writings; and it also is a remarkable circumstance, that the silence which the learned Dr. Dodwell has observed to have kept on this subject (in his Treatise on St. Ireneus, p. 67), is a still greater proof against the antiquity of the evangelists which we now have, and that the fathers only knew and quoted others which the contempt of the succeeding ages has caused to disappear.

"Thus I have endeavoured to show, that the God which was worshipped by the Jews, was not, nor could possibly be, the God which we worship. The inference and conclusion which I draw is, that as the promises of a Messiah, or Christ, came from this God, they can have no claim upon us whatever.

"In the next place, I have endeavoured to shew, that the first Christians and fathers of the church only looked upon Jesus Christ as an exceedingly virtuous good man, but nothing supernatural or divine; and I will now state to you that Origen was very near losing the honour of his saintship on account of his believing Christ was only a man. And it appears through all the Testament that he was esteemed a mere man by his family and neighbours.

"I am now come to the proofs (concerning the evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) of their being of modern date, and unknown to the first Christians; and in the *Historia Christianorum ante Constantinum*, you will find that 'they were four clerks, scribes, or writers, that the cabal or party of the orthodox put into the office, for attesting the different writings and traditions concerning Jesus Christ, and that each had his name affixed to his writing when he had done; and that it was a long time before they could bring any into their belief, indeed not till the rest of the writings were almost totally destroyed.' In short, it is impossible to conceive they could have had existence for two or three hundred years, and not be quoted or known to any of the fathers or writers in that time, who must and did quote continually from the others."

Note (C). —"A Catalogue of Books mentioned by the fathers and other antient writers, as truly or falsely ascribed to Jesus Christ, his apostles, and other eminent persons.

"I. *Of books reported to be written by Christ himself, or that particularly concern him.*

"1. His Letter in answer to that of Abgarus, King of Edessa. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. 1. c. 13. You may also consult Cedrenus, Nicephorus, Constantinus Porphyrogennetus in the Manipulus of Combefisius, p. 79, &c. extant.

"2. The Epistle of Christ to Peter and Paul. Augustin. contra Faustum. l. 28. c. 13.

"3. The Parables and Sermons of Christ. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 3. c. 39.

"4. A Hymn which Christ secretly taught his Apostles and Disciples. Augustin. Epist. 253. ad Ceretium Episcopum.

"5. A Book of the Magic of Christ. Augustin. de consensu evangelico, l. 1. c. 9, 10. If it be not the same with the Epistle to Peter and Paul.

"6. A Book of the Nativity of our Savior, of the Holy Virgin his Mother, and her Midwife. Gelasius apud Gratianum, Decret, 1. part. Dist. 15. c. 3. But I believe this is the same with the Gospel of James; whereof in its due order.

"II. *MARY.*

"1. An Epistle to Ignatius; which is now extant among his works.

"2. Another Epistle to the Inhabitants of Messina: to be read among the same Ignatius's works.

"3. A Book of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary, usually publish'd with St. Jerome's works.

"4. Another Book about the Death of Mary, is said by Lambecius to ly unpublish'd in the emperor's library, T. 4. p. 131.

"5. We shall not insist on the Book of Mary concerning the Miracles of Christ, and the Ring of King Solomon.

"III. *PETER.*

"1. The Gospel of Peter. Origen. T. 11. Comment. in Mat. Hieron. in Catalog. Scriptor. Eccles. c. 1. Euseb. Eccles. l. 3. c. 3, 25. Idem, l. 6. c. 12.

"2. The Acts of Peter. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. 3. c. 3. Hieronym. in Catalogo. Origen. Tom. 21. Comment. in Joan. Isidorus Pelusiota, l. 2. Epist. 99.

"3. The Revelation of Peter. Clem. Alex. in Epitom. Theodot. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. 3. c. 26. l. 6. c. 14. Idem, l. 3. c. 3. Hieron. in Catalogo, c. 1. Zozomen. Hist. Eccles. l. 7. c. 19.

"4. The Epistle of Peter to Clemens, is still shewn in the Æthiopic language by the eastern Christians. Tilmont, Hist. Eccles. Tom. 1. part. 2. p. 497. And he has it from Cotelerius. The Epistle of Clemens to James, is publish'd in the Clementines.

"5. The Doctrine of Peter. Origen, in præfat. ad libros principiorum. Gregor. Nazian. epist. 16. Elias Levita in notis ad Nazianzeni Orationem ad cives trepidantes.

"6. The Preaching of Peter (if it be not the same with his doctrin.) Origem. Tom. 14. in Joan. Idem, in præfat. ad Libros principiorum. Clem. Alex, Stromat. l. 1. & l. 6, &c. Lactant. l. 4. c. 21. Autor libri de baptismo Hæreticorum inter opera Cypriani. Joan. Damascen. l. 2. parallel. c. 16.

"7. The Liturgy of Peter, publish'd by Lindanus, at Antwerp, in the year 1588, and at Paris, Anno 1595.

"8. The Itinerary, or Journys of Peter (mention'd by Epiphanius, Hæres. 30. n. 15. and by Athanasius in his Synopsis of the Scriptures;) I believe to be the same with the Recognitions of St. Clement still extant, wherein we have a very particular account of Peter's voyages and performances.

"The Judgment of Peter. Hieronym. in Catalogo, c. 1.

"IV. *ANDREW.*

"1. The Gospel of St. Andrew. Gelasius in Decreto, &c.

"2. The Acts of St. Andrew. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. 3. c. 25. Epiphan. Hæres. 47. n. 1. Item, 61, 63, 47. Philastrius in Hæres. 8. Gelasius in Decreto; & Turribius Asturicensis apud Paschasium Quesnerum inter epistolas Leonis magni, p. 459.

"V. *JAMES.*

"1. The Gospel of St. James, or his Protoevangelion. Origem, Tom. 11. Comment. in Mat. Epiphan. Hæres. 30. n. 23, Eustathius Antiochen. Comment. in Hexaemer. Epiphanius monachus in notis Allatii ad Eustathium. Multa ex hoc Evangelio mutuasse Gregorium Nyssenum, tacito Jacobi nomine, monet Allatius ibid. This book is now in manuscript in the library of Vienna, as is said by Lambecius, l. 5. p. 130. Father Simon says, he has seen two manuscript copies of it in the king of France's library. Nouvelles Observations, &c. p. 4. It was printed by Neander and also by Grynæus in the first volum of his orthodoxographs.

"2. The Liturgy of St. James is printed in the second tome of the Bibliotheca Patrum, at Paris, Anno 1624.

"9. We mention'd before The Book of St. James concerning the Death of the Virgin Mary; but there want reasons to believe John, and not James to be the author of it.

"VI. *JOHN.**

"1. The Acts of St. John. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. 3. c. 25. Epiphan. Hæres. 47. n. 1. Augustin. l. 1. contra adversarios legis & prophetarum. Turribii Scriptum inter Epistolas Leonis magni; & Phot. in codice 229.

"2. Another Gospel of John. Epiph. Hæres. 30. n. 23.

"3. The Itinerary, or Voyages of St. John. Gelasius in Decreto.

"4. The Liturgy of St. John. It was together with several others printed in Syriac at Rome. See father Simon in his Supplement to Leo of Modena.

"We spoke twice before of St. John or St. James's Book about the Death of the Virgin Mary.

"6. The Traditions of St. John. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. 3. c. ult.

"VII. *PHILIP.*

"1. The Gospel of St Philip. Epiphan. Hæres. 26. n. 13. Timotheus Presbyter a Combefisio editus in tomo secundo Agctuarii.

"2. The Acts of St. Philip. Gelasius in Decreto.

"VIII. *BARTHOLOMEW.*

"1. The Gospel of St. Bartholomew. Hieronym. in prolegom. Com. in Mat. Dionysius Areopagita de Mystica Theologia, cap. 1.

"IX. *THOMAS.*

"1. The Gospel of St. Thomas. Origen. in Homil. ad Luc. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. 3. c. 25. Nicephor. in Stichometria Ambros. in Comment. ad Luc. Augustin. contra Faustum, l. 22. c. 79. Cyril. Hierosolym. Catech. 4. 6. Celasius in Decreto.

"2. The Acts of St. Thomas. Epiphan. Hæres. 47. n. 1. Idem, Hæres. 61. n. 1. Augustin. contra Adimant. Idem, l. 1. de sermone Dei. Idem, contra Faustum, l. 22. c. 79.

"3. The Revelations of St. Thomas. Gelasius in Decreto.

"4. The Itinerary of St. Thomas. Gelasius in Decreto. Nicephor. in Stichometria.

"5. The Book of the Infancy of Christ by St. Thomas. Epiphan. Hæres. 34. n. 18. Nicephor. in Stichometria. Gelas. in Decreto. Lambecius says, that this book lies in manuscript in the library of Vienna, Tom. 7. p. 20. Father Simon writes that there is a manuscript copy of it in the French king's library; Nouvelles Observations, &c. It was printed two years since in Latin and Arabic, with learned notes by Mr. Syke, at Utrecht.

* There are a sect of Christians by the name of Sabeans, which subsist in the neighbourhood of Bassora, and in several parts of Arabia, Syria, Persia, and in Galilee, but which are internally denominated "Mendaiye Jahna," disciples of John. This sect existed in the apostolic times, and many have continued to this day. The first account of this sect was published by Father Ignatius, a Carmelite missionary from the court of Rome to the Nestorians of the east, who, in 1652, dedicated to the Pope an octavo intitled, "Narratio originis Rituum et Errorum Christianorum Sancti Johannis Kæmpfer," in 1683; and Norberg, in 1780, communicated further particulars.

Otter brought to Europe those copies of their sacred books which are deposited in the library of the Louvre. They are intitled Divan, or the Assembly, or Ecclesiastes; and are in number four. The first, called Sedral-Adam, professes to have been given by the angel Raphal to Adam in Paradise, and narrates the fall of the angles; it seems to be a first part of the Book of Enoch which is preserved in the Abyssinian canon, and perhaps formed a part of the Jewish canon in the time of the preaching of St. John in the wilderness. The second book treats of the ecclesiastical history of Galilee. The third, Sedra Jahna, contains the moral precepts of John, many of which also occur in the Ecclesiasticus, and in the Christian canon. The fourth, called Cholasteh, or the completion, details such ceremonial laws as John considered to be of perpetual obligation.—Schoell's Picture of the European Nations.

"X. *MATTHEW.*

"1. The Liturgy of St. Matthew. Tom. 27. Bibliothecæ Patrum Lugdunensis. Natalis Alex. in fœculo 1. part. 1. c. 11. art. 1. Gerardus, Tom. 1. Conf. Cathol. There is also a liturgy attributed to St. Mark.

"XI. *THADDÆUS.*

"1. The Gospel of St. Thaddæus. Gelasius in Decreto.

"XII. *MATTHIAS.*

"1. The Gospel of St. Matthias. Origen. Homil. 1. in. Luc. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. 3. c. 25. Hieronym. in prolegom. ad comment. in Mat. Ambros. in Comment. ad Luc. Gelas in Decreto.

"2. The Traditions of St. Matthias. Clem. Alex. Stromat. l. 7.

"XIII. *PAUL.*

"1. The Acts of St. Paul. Origen. l. 1. c. 2. de Principiis. Idem, Tom. 21. in Joan. Euseb. l. 3. c. 3. Hist. Eccles. c. 25. Philastrius, Hæres. 88.

"2. The Acts of Paul and Thecla. Tertullian. de Baptismo, c. 17. Hieronym. de Script. Eccles. in Paulo & Luca. Augustin. l. 30. contra Faustum, 3. 4. Gelasius in Decreto. Nuper editus est hic Liber Oxonii. Epiphan. Hæres. 78. n. 16. Extant.

"3. The Epistle of Paul to the Laodiceans. Tertullian adversus Marcion. l 5. c. 17. Hieronym. in Catalogo, c. 5. Philastr. in Hæres. 88; Theodoret. Tom. 8. Hæres. 47. n. 9. & alibi. Legatur etiam Theophylactus. Extant.

"4. A third Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians. 2 Thes. 2. 2.

"5. A third Epistle to the Corinthians, and a second to the Ephesians. 1 Cor. 5. 9. Ephes. 3. 3.

"6. The Epistles of Paul to Seneca, with those of Seneca to Paul. Hieronym. in Catalogo, c. 12. Augustin. de Civitate Dei, l. 6. c. 10. Idem, in Epist. 54. ad Macedonium. Extant.

"7. The Revelation of St. Paul. Epiphan. Hæres. 38. n. 2. Zozomen. Hist. Eccles. l. 7. c. 19. Augustin. Tract. 98. in Joan Theophylact. in Schol. ad 2. ad Corinth. Mic. Glycas. annal. part. 2. Gelas. in Decreto. Zozomen. Hist. Eccles. l. 7. c. 19.

"8. The Preaching of St. Paul. Clem. Alex. Stromat. l. 6. Lactant. l. 4. c. 21. Autor etiam Anonymus de non iterando Baptismo, à Rigaltio in observationibus ad Cyprianum insertus.

"9. St. Paul's Narrative concerning the charming of Vipers, reveal'd to him by St. Michael in a Dream. Lambecius says, that there is now a manuscript of this book in the library of Vienna, Tom. 5. p. 103.

"10. The Anabaticon of Saint Paul, wherein he relates what he saw when he was snatch'd up into the third Heavens. Epiphan. Hæres. 38. n. 2.

"11. Some would infer from his own words, that he wrote a Gospel; In the Day, says he, when God shall judge the Secrets of Men by Christ Jesus according to my Gospel. Rom. 2. 16.

"XIV. *Of the Gospels of Judas Iscariot, of Eve, and Abraham, &c.*

"1. That none of the apostles might be thought unable to write a gospel, we find one alledg'd by the Caianites, a sect of the Gnostics, under the name of Judas Iscariot. Epiphan. Hæres. 38. Theodoret. l. 1. de Hæret. Fabul. c. 15.

"2. Nor should we wonder at Judas's being an author, when we read of the prophetical gospel of Eve, whom the Gnostics reckoned a patroness of their opinions, and to have receiv'd extraordinary knowledg and light in her conference with the serpent. Epiphan. Hæres. 26. n. 2.

"3. The Sethians, another sort of Gnostics, shew'd an Apocalypse under the name of the Patriarch Abraham; not to mention his learned pieces of astrology, nor the books of Adam believed by the Jews. Epiphan. Hæres. 30. n. 16. Isidor, Pelusiot, l. 2. Epist. 99.

" 4. The Prophecy of Enoch, which St. Jude quotes, is for the most part still extant, and was believ'd to be genuin by several fathers, who alledg it in defence of the Christian religion. Origen. contra Cels. l. 5. Idem de Principiis. Turtullian. de habitu Muliebri, c. 3, &c.

" 5. The Testament of the twelve Patriarchs, the Assumption of Moses, the Book of Eldad and Medad, the Psalms of King Solomon, the Revelation of Zachary, and the Vision of Isaiah; but I forget that I am reciting the spurious books of the Christians, and not of the Jews, who, when there's occasion, will afford as large a catalogue. See note (A).

" XV. *Of the Gospels of the Hebrews and the Egyptians, with som general Pieces.*

" 1. The Gospel of the twelve Apostles. Origen. Homil. 1. in Luc. Ambros. in Procem. Commentar. in Luc. Theophylact. Comment. in cap. 1. v. 1. secundum Lucam, &c. But this piece was, I believe, originally the same with

" 2. The Gospel of the Hebrews. Ignat. in Epist. ad Smyrnæos. Clem. Alex. l. 1. Stromat. Origen. tract. 8. in Matt. Idem, Homil. 14. in Jerem. & in Comment. ad Joan. Epiphan. Hæres. 30. n. 13, 22, &c. Hieronym. in Catalogo Script. Eccles. c. 4. & alibi passim. This gospel several have maintain'd to be the original of St. Matthew.

" 3. The Gospel of the Egyptians. Clem. Rom. Epist. 2. ad Corinth. c. 12. Clem. Alex. l. 3. Stromat. Id. ibid. Origem. Homil. in Luc. Epiphan. Hæres. 62. n. 2.

" 4. The Apostles Creed, though of late years it begins to be call'd in question.

" 5. The doctrine and Constitution of the Apostles. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. 3. c. 25. Athanas. in Synopsi. Epiphan. Hæres. 80. n. 7. 45. n. 5. 70. n. 10. 75. n. 6. Idem in Compendiaria fidei expositione, n. 22. Incertus de Aleatoribus inter Scripta Cypriani. There are Διδαχαὶ and Διδασκαλίαι, or doctrines, both attributed to every one of the apostles singly, and also to their companions and immediat successors, too long to insert particularly. These doctrins were bound with the other books of the New Testament, as appears by the Stichometry of Nicephorus and Anastasius; tho' it was not always pretended that they were original pieces, but rather collections of what the companions and successors of the apostles either heard, or pretended to hear from their own mouths.

" 6. We need not produce our authorities for the Canons and Constitutions of the Apostles, since many learned members of the church of England have written large volums to prove 'em genuin.

" 7. The Precepts of Peter and Paul. This book lies in manuscript in the great duke's library at Florence, if we believe Ludovicus Jacobus a Sancto Carolo, in his Bibliotheca Pontificia, l. 1. p. 177.

" 8. The present Coptic Christians have a book of doctrins, which they believe was compos'd by the twelve apostles, with the assistance of St. Paul, &c.

" 9. The Gospel of Perfection. Epiphan. Hæres. 26. n. 2.

" 10. The Acts of all the Apostles, written by themselves. Epiphan. Hæres. 30. n. 16. Isidor. Pelus. l. 2. Epist. 99. Varadatus in Epist. ad Leonem Imp. Tom. 4. Concil. Labbæi, col. 978. Jo. Mahala, Chronograph. l. x.

" 11. The Itinerary of all the Apostles, as well as of every one of 'em singly, was formerly extant.

" XVI. *Of the Writings of the Disciples and Companions of the Apostles.*

" 1. Of the books ascribed to the disciples and companions of the apostles, and which are still extant, som are thought genuin and of great authority at this time: Every one were approv'd at som time, or by som party: And yet I am of opinion, that it is the easiest task in the world (next to that of shewing the ignorance and superstition of the

writers) to prove them all spurious, and fraudulently impos'd on the credulous. Those I mean, are the epistles of Clemens Romanus to the Corinthians, his Recognitions, Decretals, and other pieces bearing his name; all the Epistles of Ignatius; the Epistle of Polycarpus to the Philippeans, with his other writings; the Acts of the Martyrdom of Ignatius and Polycarpus; the Pastor of Hermas; the Epistle of Barnabas;* the works of Dionysius the Areopagite; the Epistle of Marcellus, Peter's disciple, to Nereus and Achilleus, and his Treatise on the Conflict of Peter and Simon Magus; the Life of St. John, by Prochorus; the Petition of Veronica to Herod on the behalf of Christ; the Passion of Timothy by Polycrates; the Passions of Peter and Paul in two books by Linus; the two Epistles of Martial of Limousin, and the Life of the same by Aurelianus; the Gospel of Nicodemus; the History of the Apostolical Conflict by Abdias, who is said to be appointed first bishop of Babylon by the apostles; the Passion of Saint Andrew, written by the presbyters of Achia; the Epistle of Evodius, entitul'd the Light; the Altercation of Jason and Papiscus; the Acts of Titus composed by Zena, St. Paul's companion, with a multitude of other acts and passions. The Gospel of Barnabas, the Revelation of Stephen, the Passion of Barnabas, and the Epistles of Joseph the Arimathean to the Britons, are quite lost; and were they extant, would probably appear to be as foolish and fabulous as the rest.

" XVII. *Of Pieces alledg'd in favor of Christianity, which were forg'd under the name of Heathens.*

" 1. The works of Trismegistus and Asclepius. Extant.

" 2. The books of Zoroaster and Hystaspes.

" 3. The Sibyllin Oracle cited so frequently, and with such authority, by the primitive fathers, that †Celsus takes occasion from thence to nickname the Christians Sibyllists. Extant. ‡

" 4. The Letter of Pontius Pilat to Tiberius, with the Speech of Tiberius to the Senat. Extant.

" 5. The Epistle of Lentulus, giving a description of the person of Christ. Extant.

" 6. The Epistles or Orders of Adrian, Antoninus Pius, and Marcus Aurelius, in favor of the Christians. Extant in Justin Martyr, &c. &c. &c.

" In the second place, by the books of whose spuriousness I said the world was not yet convinc'd, tho' in my privat opinion I could not think 'em genuin, I meant those of the other great persons, or the suppos'd writings of certain apostolic men (as they call 'em) which are at this present, as well as in ancient times, read with extraordinary veneration And they are the Epistle of Barnabas, the Pastor of Hermas, the Epistle of Polycarpus to the Philippians, the first Epistle of Clemens Romanus to the Corinthians, and the seven Epistles of Ignatius. These are generally receiv'd in the church of Rome, and also by most protestants; but those of the church of England have particularly signaliz'd themselves in their defence, and by publishing the correctest impressions of them. The ancients paid them the highest respect, and reckon'd the first four of 'em especially, as good as any part of the New Testament. The Epistle of Barnabas is, by §Clemens Alexandrinus, and Origen, not only reckon'd genuin, but cited as scripture; tho' he says in express terms, That *the apostles, before their conversion, were the greatest sinners in nature;* which, if believed, would rob us of an argument we draw from their integrity and simplicity against infidels, to say nothing now of the

* The Gospel of Barnabas, the Arabic originals are now extant in the east (see Sale); translations of which are in the Italian and Spanish languages, see Dr. White's Sermons, page 12 in the notes.

† Origen. contr. Cels. l. 5.

‡ See Clark's Bibliographical Dictionary, vol. vii.

§ Stromat. l. 2. & 5. contra Cels. l. 1. de Princip. l. 3.

many other ridiculous passages in Barnabas. The pastor, or visions, precepts, and similitudes of Hermas (who is suppos'd to be the person mentioned by Paul in his Epistle to the Romans) is cited as Canonical Scripture by *Irenæus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, and others, and was for such receiv'd by several churches, tho' I think it the sillyest book in the world. The Epistle of Polycarpus (the suppos'd disciple of St. John) was read in the churches of Asia, and is quoted by †Irenæus, Eusebius, and others. The Epistle of Clemens Romanus (whom they would have to be the same that's mention'd by Paul in his Epistle to the Philippians) is cited by ‡Irenæus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Eusebius, and others. The Epistles of Ignatius are quoted by Irenæus§, Eusebius, with several more; but particularly by ‖ Origen, who says, that in one of 'em he found it very elegantly written, That *the virginity of* Mary *was a secret to the devil; which Virginity***, *with her Delivery, and the Death of our Lord*, Ignatius says, *were Three famous Mysteries wrought in the Silence of God.* These words may be now read in the Epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians. Now these are the books of whose genuinness and authority I took the liberty to doubt, notwithstanding the better opinion which is entertain'd of 'em by others.

"But tho' I will not, as I said, enter now into a particular discussion of these writings, yet I shall offer one thing to the consideration of their defenders. Either they really believe the Epistles of Barnabas and Clemens (for example) to be theirs, or to be supposititious. If not theirs, there's a speedy end of the dispute, and I have attain'd my end without more argumentation. But if they think 'em genuin, why do they not receive 'em into the canon of the scriptures, since they were the companions and fellow laborers of the apostles, as well as St. Mark or St. Luke? If this quality was sufficient to entitle the two last to inspiration, why should it not do as much for the two first? And if this be not all the reason, pray let us know the true one, having never heard of any other. To say, that tho' the books are authentic, yet they ought not to be receiv'd now into the canon, because the ancients did not think fit to approve 'em, is but a mere evasion: For 'tis well known, that till after Eusebius's time, neither the second Epistle of Peter, nor that of James, or Jude, with some others, were approv'd as canonical; and yet they were afterwards receiv'd by the whole church. Wherefore then may not we as well at this time establish the Epistles of Clemens and Barnabas, if they be undoubtedly theirs, which I shall be persuaded their patrons believe, when they quote 'em as scripture, and then I know where to have them, and how to deal with 'em. But of this enough.

"I said above, that by the spurious pieces I meant only a great part of the books which are recited in the catalogue; for others of 'em do not seem to deserve so mean a rank: and I am so far from rejecting all those books of the New Testament which we now receive, that I am rather solicitous lest, as in the dark ages of popery, those we commonly call apocryphal books, were added to the Bible, so at the same time, and in as ignorant ages before, several others might be taken away, for not suiting all the opinions of the strongest party. Nor is it unworthy observation, that most of these books are condemn'd by the decree of pope Gelasius. How many true and spurious gospels or histories of Christ were extant in St. Luke's time, God knows; but that there were several may be evidently infer'd from his own words, who tells Theophilus††,

* Advers. Hæres. l. 4. c. 3. Stromat. l. 1. 2. 4. 6. Princip. l. 1. c. 3. l. 2. c. 1. Homil. 10. in Hos. & alibi passim.

† L. 1. contr. Hæres. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. 4. c. 14. Phot. cod. 126.

‡ Contra Hæres. l. 3. c. 3. Stromat. l. 1. 4. 5. 6. De Princip. l. 2. Hist. Eccles. l. 3. c. 16. 36. l. 4. c. 22. 23.

§ Contra Hæres. l. 5. c. 28. Hist. Eccles. l. 3. c. 36.

‖ Homil. 6. in Luc.

** Ep. ad Ephes.

†† Luc. l. 1. 2. 3.

that many had undertaken the same work before him, and, as if he alluded to som spurious relations, assures him, that he'll write nothing but what he receiv'd from such as had a perfect knowledg of those matters from the beginning. That there should be first and last, but just the number of four, I never heart of any that went about to demonstrat, except Irenæus the fam'd successor of the apostles; and he positively affirms, that there cannot be more, nor fewer than four gospels: 'For, says he, there be four regions of this world wherein we live, with four principal winds, and the church is spread over all the earth: But the support and foundation of the church is the gospel, and the spirit of life: Therefore it must follow, that it has four pillows, blowing incorruptibility on all sides, and giving life to men.' Then he corroborats his argument from the four cherubims, and the four faces in Ezekiel's vision†, to wit, of a lion, an ox, a man, and an eagle; which is the reason, by the way, why the four evangelists are painted with these emblems in the Mass-Book and in our Common-Pray'er-Book. So he concludes at last, 'That they are all vain, unlearn'd, and impudent, who after this would assert, that there were more or fewer than four gospels.'

"Several of these books whereof I now treat, are quoted to prove important points of the Christian religion by the most celebrated fathers, as of equal authority with those we now receive; and the testimony of these fathers was the principal reason of establishing these in our present canon, and is still alledg'd to that purpose by all that write in defence of the scriptures. Of so much weight is this testimony, that Eusebius‡ rejects the acts, gospel, preaching, and revelation of Peter from being authentic, for no other reason, but because no ancient or modern writer (says he) has quoted proofs out of them. But herein Eusebius was mistaken; for the contrary appears by the testimonies markt in the catalogue, and which any body may compare with the originals. In another place he§ says, That the gospels of Peter, Thomas, Matthias, and such like, with the acts of Andrew, John, and the other apostles, are spurious, because no ecclesiastic writer, from the time of the apostles down to his own, has vouchsaf'd to quote them, which is absolutely false of som, as we have already shewn. Had Eusebius found any of these pieces cited by the precedent orthodox writers, he would have own'd them as the genuin productions of the apostles, and admitted them (as we say) into the canon; but having met no such citations, he presently concluded there were none, which made him reject those books: And, I say, what I have already demonstrated, that proofs were quoted out of som of 'em long before, so that they might still belong to the canon for all Eusebius.

"To these considerations two objections may perhaps be made. First, It is unlikely, they'll say, that Eusebius should not have read the ancients; nay, that the contrary appears by his many citations out of them; and that consequently those works of the fathers, which we have now in our hands, are not the same which were read in his time, or that at least they are strangely adulterated, and full of interpolations. With all my heart: But then let us not be urg'd by their authority in other points no more than in this, since in one thing they may as well be alter'd and corrupted as in another; and indeed, by a common rule of equity (being found chang'd in some places) they ought to be so reputed in all the rest, till the contrary be evidently prov'd.

"The second objection is, That altho' these pieces have bin acknowledg'd to be the writings of those apostles whose names they bear, at certain times, and in som churches, yet they were expressly rejected by others. To this I answer, That there is not one single book in the New Testament which was not refus'd by som of the ancients as unjustly father'd upon the apostles, and really forg'd by their adversaries: which as no body thinks it now a good reason to disapprove them, so I see not

* Adversus Hæres. l. 3. 11. † Ezek. vi. 6, 10. ‡ Hist. Eccles. l. 3. c. 3. § Ibid. c. 25

how it should any more conclude against my opinion. But because the various sects of those early days did, like us, condemn one another for damnable heretics; and the admitting or refusing, the framing or corrupting of certain books, were som of the crimes which were mutually imputed, I shall now insist only on the Epistle to the Hebrews, that of James, the second of Peter, the second and third of John, the Epistle of Jude, and the Revelation. These seven pieces were a long time plainly doubted by the *ancients, particularly by those whom we esteem the soundest part; and yet they are receiv'd (not without convincing arguments) by the moderns. Now, I say, by a more than a parity of reason, that the preaching and revelation of Peter (for example) were receiv'd by the ancients, and ought not therefore to be rejected by the moderns, if the approbation of the fathers be a proper recommendation of any books.

"The council of Laodicea, which was held about three hundred and sixty years after Christ, and is the first assembly wherein the canon of scripture was establisht, could not among so great a variety of books as were then in the world, certainly determine which were the true monuments of the apostles, but either by a particular revelation from heaven, or by crediting the testimony of their ancestors, which was always better preserv'd and convey'd by writing than by oral tradition, the most uncertain rule in nature, witness the monstrous fables of papists, rabbins, Turks, and the eastern nations both Christians and idolators. But of any extraordinary revelation made to this council we hear not a word; and for the books I defend, I have the same testimony which is usually alledg'd in the behalf of others. However, I shall not be too hasty to make a final decision of this matter with my self, lest I incur the dreadful curse which the author of the Revelation† pronounces against such as shall add or take away from that book. Instead therefore of censuring and calumniating (which ought not to be reckon'd virtues in any order of men, and least of all in the ministers of the gospel) let such as are better enlighten'd endeavor to extricate the erroneous out of these or the like difficulties, that they may be able to distinguish truly, and that in such an extraordinary number of books, all pretending equally to a divine origin, they may have som infallible marks of discerning the proper rules lest they unhappily mistake the false one for the true.

"How necessary it is to have the canon of scripture set in its due light, we may learn from the ancient as well as our modern unbelievers. Celsus‡ exclaims against the too great liberty which the Christians (as if they were drunk, says he) took of changing the first writing of the gospel three, or four, or more times, that so they might deny whatever was urg'd against 'em as retracted before. Nay, as low down as St. Augustin's time, was there not a very considerable sect of the Christians themselves, I mean the Manichæans, who shewed other scriptures, and deny'd the genuinness of the whole New Testament. One of these call'd Faustus, after shewing that his adversaries disapprov'd of several things in the Old Testament, thus pursues his argument: 'You think, says he, that of all books in the world, the Testament of the Son only could not be corrupted, that it alone contains nothing which ought to be disallow'd; especially when it appears, that it was neither written by himself nor his apostles, but a long time after by certain obscure persons, who, lest no credit should be given to the stories they told of what they could not know, did prefix to their writings partly the names of the apostles, and partly of those who succeeded the apostles; affirming that what they wrote themselves was written by these; Wherein they seem to me (continues he) to have bin the most hainously injurious to the disciples of Christ, by

* Let the third and twenty-fifth chapters of the Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius, lib. 3. be consulted, with what St. Jerome has written on the same subject.

† Rev. xxii. 18, 19. ‡ Origen. l. 2. contra Cels.

§ Augustin. contra Faust. l. 32. c. 2.

attributing to them what they wrote themselves so dissonant and repugnant; and that they pretended to write those gospels under their names, which are so full of mistakes, of contradictory relations and opinions, that they are neither coherent with themselves, nor consistent with one another. What is this therefore but to throw a calumny on good men, and to fix the accusation of discord on the unanimous society of Christ's disciples.' The same Faustus a little after accuses his adversaries, who had power enough to be counted orthodox, in these express words: 'Many* things were foisted by your ancestors into the scriptures of our Lord, which, tho' mark'd with his name, agree not with his faith. And no wonder, since, as those of our party have already frequently prov'd, these things were neither written by himself nor his apostles: but several matters after their decease were pick'd up from stories and flying reports by I know not what set of Half-Jews; and these not agreeing among themselves, who nevertheless publishing all these particulars under the names of the apostles of the Lord, or of those that succeeded them, have feign'd their own lies and errors to be written according to them.'

"Since therefore the Manichæans rejected the whole New Testament, since the Ebionites or Nazarens, (who were the oldest Christians) had a different copy of St. Matthew's‡ gospel, and the Marcionites, had a very different one of St. Luke's; since St. John's was attributed to Cerinthus, all the Epistles of St. Paul were deny'd by som, a different copy of 'em shewn by others; and that the seven pieces we mention'd before, were rejected a long time by all Christians, almost with universal consent."

Note (D) page 44.—I have not met with any remarks or answers to Halhed's account of the "Hindoo History of the Age of the World," but in Mr. Tennant's "Indian Recreations." Had I time I could fully refute his remarks: Mr. T., like many other writers, substitute rant for reason, and sophistry for proofs.

Note (E) page 52.—The works of Confucius have recently been translated by Mr. Marsham, and the first volume has been imported. This volume contains *Lun Guee*, being a collection of the *Sage Chee* precepts.

* Augustin. ibid. l. 33. c. 3.
‡ See the improved version of the New Testament by the Unitarians.

Part the Second.

PRAYERS

FOR THE USE OF

ALL THOSE WHO WORSHIP BUT

ONE DEITY.

"It is highly requisite that our addresses to the throne of grace, should be dictated in the utmost simplicity." "In short, they should be formed, as near as possible, upon the plan of that excellent and perfect model taught us by our Blessed Saviour himself."

Evanson.

THEOPHILANTHROPIST.

HAVING, in a former work, taken the above signature, I deem it necessary to say a few words on that branch of theological opinion.

The name is a compound term, derived from the Greeks, and intimates that they profess *to adore God, and love their fellow creatures.*

Their belief I have given in the work, which contain the whole confession of their faith. "*The temple, the most worthy of the divinity in the eyes of the Theophilanthropists, is the universe. Abandoned sometimes under the vault of heaven to the contemplation of the beauties of nature, they render its author the homage of adoration and gratitude."

"If any one ask you what is the origin of your religion and your worship? You can answer him thus: Open the most ancient books which are known, seek there what was the religion; what the worship of the first human Beings of which history has preserved the remembrance. There you will see that their religion was what we now call *natural religion,* because it has for its principle even the Author of Nature. It is he that has engraven it in the

* These extracts are taken from the Manuel of the Sect, by Dr. John Walker.

hearts of the first human Beings, in ours, in that of all the inhabitants of the earth: this religion which consists in worshipping God and cherishing our kind, is what we express by one single word, that of Theophilanthropy. Thus our religion is that of our first parents; it is yours; it is ours; it is the universal religion. As to our worship, it is also that of our first fathers: see even in the most ancient writers, that the exterior signs by which they render their homage to the Creator, were of great simplicity. They dressed for him an altar of earth, they offered him in sign of their gratitude, and of their submission, some of the productions they held of his liberal hand. The fathers exhorted the children to virtue; they all encouraged one another, under the auspices of the divinity, to the accomplishment of their duties. This simple worship, the sages of all nations have not ceased to profess, and they have transmitted it down to us without interruption.

"If they ask you of whom you hold your mission? answer, We hold it of God himself; who in giving us two arms to aid our kind, has also given us intelligence to mutually enlighten each other, and the love of good to bring us together to virtue; of God who has given experience and wisdom to the aged to guide the young, and authority to fathers to conduct their children.

"If they are not struck with the force of these reasons, do not farther discuss the subject, and do not engage yourself in controversies which tend to diminish the love of our neighbours. Our principles are the eternal truth; they will subsist whatever individuals may support or attack them, and the effects of the wicked will not

even prevail against them. Rest firmly attached to them, without attacking or defending any religious systems; and remember, that similar discussions have never *produced good*, and that they have often tinged the earth with the blood of men. Let us lay aside system, and apply ourselves to doing good. It is the only road to happiness."

In places of worship the audience sit to hear discourses on morality, &c. which are diversified by hymns.

N. B. Aspland, (an Unitarian minister,) has lately published a Selection of Hymns suitable for the worship of *one* God.

PREFACE.

THE use of prayer is universally acknowledged by all sects and denominations, in which the religious world is divided; and so great is it considered by the Mahometans, that it is the fundamental principle of their duty, Permit me then to offer the following *short prayers* to the contemplation of that body of people who adhere to no State religion, but acknowledge *God to be the only object of worship.*

All public liturgies admit an intercession between God and man; and consequently are not adapted to those who reject it. They therefore have recourse to extemporary prayer, and, as the mind is apt to take an eccentric course, I thought it would be acceptable to many, that some short prayer and lessons, such as these, were composed, that they might be used in family devotion.

Both extemporary prayers and public liturgies have such a multiplicity of words, that it is great grievance, as it has a tendency to weaken rather than promote a spirit of devotion.

Bigland, a sensible and elegant writer, observes, that "The prayers which presumptuous mortals offer up to the throne of the Divine Majesty, are not only often absurb, but some-

times indisputably impious. What esteem shall we make of all the prayers that have been dictated by superstition, by party spirit, by religious enmity, and all the various contensions that agitate the minds of weak and erring mortals; when nations are often directed to offer up to the Sovereign Ruler of the universe, prayers for the prosperity and success of tyrants and usurpers, the desolators of the earth and butchers of mankind? Will the God of Nature, the Universal Parent, the Benignant Father of Men, look down with a smile of compassion or frown of indignation, on those petitions? Will he pity the ignorance, spurn the presumption, or despise the hypocrisy of the petitioners?*"

Christ, when giving advice to his brethren, says, "When ye pray use not many idle words as the Gentiles do: for they think that they will be heard for their much speaking. Be not therefore like them, for your Father knoweth what thing ye have need of before ye ask him." Also, "when thou prayest, enter into thy closet." It is only when we are assembled with our families, or in our closets, that any fervency of devotion can be offered up to the Divine Majesty, for his care and protection of us.

Although I have principally intended this work for the use of the Theophilanthropist, the prayers may be adopted in private worship by every person who acknowledges but one God.

* Bigland's Essays, Vol. II. page 234.

MORNING PRAYER.

A Hymn may be sung, then the following Ejaculation.

"DEARLY beloved brethren, it is our duty to acknowledge and confess our sins and wickedness, and that we should not dissemble nor cloke them before the face of Almighty God our Heavenly Father; but confess them with an humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart; to the end that we may obtain forgiveness of the same, by His infinite goodness and mercy: Wherefore I beseech you, as many as are here, to accompany me with a pure heart, and humble voice, unto the throne of the heavenly grace, saying after me:"

Thou, O God! supreme and incorruptible Being; prime supporter of the universal orb! The space between the heavens and the earth is possessed by Thee alone! To Thee we address our humble supplications: O give us, thy servants, an humble and serious frame of mind to hear thy sublime law with profit, so that at the last we may finally live according to that which is right to our fellow beings.

Pardon us, O God, the sins we have committed; prosper our labours, and give us fortitude to live according to Thy law. Grant,

we beseech Thee, O God, that we may continue to receive the blessings we now enjoy, free from the pangs of want and disease, and all the temptations of the wicked.

Knowing, O God, that Thou wilt grant all our humble petitions, as far as they are consistent with Thy inscrutable providence, we shall be satisfied with our stations and afflictions; knowing that what misfortunes and severity we feel in this life, is good for our spiritual welfare; we humbly resign ourselves to Thy guidance and direction for ever. Amen.

MORNING LESSON.

"HAPPY *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Happy *are* those who mourn: for they shall be comforted. Happy *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the land. Happy *are* those that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Happy *are* the compassionate: for they shall obtain compassion. Happy *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Happy *are* the peace-makers: for they shall be called the sons of God. Happy *are* those that are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Happy *are* ye when *men* shall reproach you, and persecute *you*, and speak all kind of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad: for great *shall be* your reward in heaven: for so *men* persecuted the prophets that were before you."

"Ye have heard that it hath been said to those of old time, 'Thou shalt do no murther;' and 'Whosoever shall do murther shall be liable to the judgement.' But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be liable to the judgement: and whosoever shall say to his brother, 'Thou vile man,' shall be liable to the council: but whosoever shall say, 'Thou fool,' shall be liable to hell-fire. If therefore thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there remember that thy brother hath any matter *of complaint* against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him; lest the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou wilt by no means come out thence, till thou have paid the uttermost farthing.

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery.' But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman in order to desire her, hath already committed whoredom with her in his heart. Now if thy right eye cause thee to offend, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: for it is better for thee that one of thy members perish, than that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand cause thee to offend, cut it off, and cast *it* from thee: for it is better for thee that one of thy members perish, than that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

"Now it hath been said, 'Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a bill of

divorcement.' But I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, except on account of whoredom, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is put away, committeth adultery.

"Again, ye have heard that it hath been said to those of old time, 'Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths.' But I say unto you, Swear not in any wise, either by the heaven, for it is God's throne: or by the earth, for it is his footstool: or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great king. Neither shalt thou swear by thine head; because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your discourse be, Yes, yes; No, no: for whatsoever *is* more than these, proceedeth from evil.

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say unto you that ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall strike thee on thy right check, turn to him the other also. And if any man choose to sue thee at law, and to take away thy vest, let him have *thy* mantle also. And whosoever shall compel thee *to go* one mile, go with him two. Give to him that asketh thee; and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not away.

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.' But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless those that curse you, do good to those that hate you, and pray for those that injuriously treat you, and persecute you: that ye may be *the* sons of your Father that *is* in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the righteous and on the un-

righteous. For if ye love those who love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye which is excellent? do not even the gentiles in like manner? Be ye therefore perfect, as your Father that is in heaven is perfect.

"Take heed that ye do not your *acts of* righteousness before men, in order to be seen by them: otherwise, ye have no reward with your Father that is in heaven.

"When therefore thou doest *thine* alms, sound not a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may receive honour from men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: that thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father who seeth in secret himself will reward thee openly.

"And when thou prayest, be not as the hypocrites *are*: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Verily I say unto you, that they have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father that is in secret: and thy Father, that seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not many idle words, as the gentiles do: for they think that they will be heard for their much speaking. Be not therefore like them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him. In this manner therefore pray ye: 'Our Father, who art in heaven, sanctified be thy name, Thy kingdom

come. Thy will be done on earth, as *it is* in heaven. Give us this day the food sufficient for us. And forgive us our trespasses, as we also forgive those who trespass against us. And bring us not into temptation, but preserve us from evil.' For if ye forgive men their offences, your heavenly Father will forgive you also: but if ye forgive not mentheir offences, neither will your Father forgive your offences.

"Moreover, when ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, that they have their reward. But when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father who is in secret: and thy Father who seeth in secret shall reward thee.

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust consume, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumeth, and where thieves do not break through and steal: for where your treasure is, there will be your heart also. The lamp of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be clear, thy whole body will be enlightened. But if thy eye be dim, thy whole body will be in darkness. If therefore the light which is in thee be darkness, how great *must be* that darkness! No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and wealth. Wherefore I say unto you, Take no anxious thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor

for your body, with what ye shall be clothed. Is not *your* life more than food; and *your* body than clothing? Behold the fowls of the air; that they neither sow, nor reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye much better than they? Now which of you, by taking anxious thought, can add one cubit to his stature? And why take ye anxious thought for clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither labour nor spin: yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothe the herb of the field, which flourisheth to-day, and to-morrow is cast into the furnace; *will he* not much more *clothe* you, O ye of little faith? Wherefore take no anxious thought, saying, 'What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, What shall we put on?' (for after all these things the gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no anxious thought about the morrow: for the morrow will take anxious thought for the things of itself. Sufficient to the day *is* its own evil.

"Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgement ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye deal out, it shall be measured to you *again*. And why beholdest thou the splinter which is in thy brother's eye, but observest not the beam which is in thine own eye? Or how canst thou say to thy brother,

'Let me take the splinter out of thine eye:' and, behold, a beam *is* in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first take the beam out of thine own eye; and then thou wilt see clearly to take the splinter out of thy brother's eye.

"Give not that *food* which *is* holy to dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they tread them under their feet, and turn and rend you.

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. What man is there among you, who, if his son shall ask bread, will give him a stone? or, if he shall ask a fish, will give him a serpent? If ye therefore, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more will your Father, that is in heaven, give good things to those that ask him? All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye likewise so unto them: for this is the law and the prophets.

"Enter in by the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, which leadeth to destruction, and there are many that enter by it. How strait *is* the gate, and *how* narrow *is* the way which leadeth to life; and *how* few are there who find it! But beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. By their fruits ye will know them. Do men gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles? In like manner every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but

a corrupt tree bringeth forth bad fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth bad fruit: nor *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye will know them.

"Not every one that saith unto me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father that is in heaven. Many will say unto me in that day; 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name cast out demons? and in thy name done many wonderful works?' But I will then declare unto them, 'I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.'

"Whosoever therefore heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him to a wise man, who built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the streams came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not: for it was founded on a rock. And whosoever heareth these words of mine, and doeth them not, will be likened to a foolish man, who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, and the streams came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell, and the fall of it was great."

Thou Omnipotent and Almighty Creator, we have heard Thy word delivered to us by Thy beloved servant, Jesus Christ; an expounder of Thy law. Grant, we beseech Thee, that Thou would dispose our minds so

that we may have heard it with profit and instruction and live accordingly; so at the last we may reign in mansions of felicity, were neither moth or rust doth consume. Almighty Power hearken to these our humble supplications, and grant our prayers. Amen.

[*If the elder who performs the service, should think it necessary,* The Confession of Faith *may here be ejaculated; then an Hymn, addressed to the great Creator; afterwards conclude the service with a discourse on morality.*]

EVENING PRAYER.

A Hymn may be sung, then the following Ejaculation.

"DEARLY beloved brethren, it is our duty to acknowledge and confess our sins and wickedness, and that we should not dissemble nor cloak them before the face of Almighty God our Heavenly Father; but confess them with an humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart; to the end that we may obtain forgiveness of the same, by His infinite goodness and mercy: Wherefore I beseech you, as many as are here, to accompany me with a pure heart, and humble voice, unto the throne of the heavenly grace, saying after me:"

Thou Great and Omnipotent Father: permit us Thine unworthy servants to present our heart-felt thanks to the throne of Thy glory, for all Thy goodness to us and to all men. Thou has preserved us through sickness and in health, and brought us to this day to praise Thy bounteous providence. Grant, O Almighty God, a continuance of these blessings; teach us to hear meekly Thy laws that issue out of the mouths of Thy beloved sages, that we may learn wisdom from them; so at the last we may meet

with that eternal felicity which is proper for the good in all ages and nations.

Knowing, O God, Thou will grant our requests, as far as are consistent with Thy providence, if we live so as to deserve them; we resign ourselves to Thy guidance and direction for ever and ever. Amen.

EVENING LESSON*.

"UPON all occasions, in which you are required to speak or act, do it with deliberation and sedateness. Most of our faults arise from too much vivacity and precipitation. *Your countenance ought to be grave and your words thoroughly weighed.* A light and trifling exteriour only attracts contempt or raillery. If you are obliged to give either advice or reproof use never sharp and cutting expressions: the effect of your anger and ridicule, would be to enflame the passions, not to correct them.

"Do you aspire to the character of a good man? seek out a faithful friend: honestly confess your faults, and never have recourse to a lye to disguise them. A fault acknowledged is half amended. If your sincerity become never so little suspected, who will regard you? Lying is the vice of base souls, and of the vilest populace.

"When you are to treat upon any affair with

* These sentences I have taken from the "Chinese Miscellany," I formerly recommended it at the conclusion of my "Discourse," as containing complete rules of action.

a great man, study his air and countenance; if he hear you coldly, if your suit displease him, proceed no farther: in vain would you press him; the refusal you are about to incur, would perhaps disgrace you with him for ever.

"If you give a loose to reproaches against any one, who hath displeased you; if you proceed so far as to strike him, he will make reprisals and will give you blows for blows, reproaches for reproaches: thus to give yourself up to the impulses of anger, is to injure yourself, it is to beat yourself. If you are of a quarrelsome disposition; if you surrender yourself up to the intemperance of your tongue, and take a pleasure in backbiting and slander, you will make yourself feared; but do not deceive yourself, Heaven hath justice.

"Never speak of the failings of another, and never affect to act the droll; for, not to mention the complaints and murmurs, which you will draw upon yourself; you will lose even those natural graces, which render a man amiable in society.

"You suddenly appear in company, and, as soon as you enter, take the lead in the conversation; you engross all the talk to yourself, and every body must be silent to hear you: what unpoliteness? Who are you, and what have you learned, to enable you thus to read lessons to others? Great bells seldom strike, and full vessels return no sound.

"What! you are clothed commodiously for summer and winter; you want for nothing; you feel not the inconveniencies of hunger, or thirst; of heat, or cold: you eat when you please, and as much as you please: are you not satisfied?

Is it a diversion proper for a reasonable being, to assume indecent liberties, and never open his mouth, but to hold satirical or unbecoming discourse? If you continue to speak and act thus without discretion or judgment, you will be put upon a level with the most stupid animals.

"So long as man lives upon the earth, he must act there a certain part; and the inequality of conditions is there necessary. If every one sought only to repose or divert himself, who would contribute to your nourishment?

"We see brethren, who in dividing their paternal inheritance, yield to each other in doubtful points, make mutual concessions with the greatest amity. How happens it afterwards that their children or grandchildren come to dispute about the same inheritance; that they quarrel, are violently enraged with each other, and often proceed so far as to weary the judges with their odious contests? How have they been able so soon to stifle in their hearts, the tender sentiments which they had received from nature and their original education?

"Be not one of those eternal jokers, who had rather lose a friend, than what they esteem a good jest: consider that such raillery is often more offensive than abusive language; the latter is commonly the effect of a fit of anger, which is soon over, and which one is afterwards sorry for: the former is a most certain sign of contempt, which one is too apt to give way to, and which one corrects in one's self seldom or never.

"Learn from your youth to conquer your passions, to regulate your heart, and to form it to virtue. Allow not yourself in any fault,

however slight it may appear: if it escapes you now, be careful not to commit it any more. The dike once broken you can no longer stop the torrent.

"Would you know what gratitude you are to expect from mankind, cast your eyes upon your children. Would you have your children obedient and submissive to you, be the same to your own parents. Know that the heart, the thoughts, the inclinations, and constitutions of men have little resemblance to those of each other; this consideration ought to engage you to bear with their failings and to dissemble them.

"The desire of amassing, if a man surrenders himself up to it, never ceases but with life. Riches are often accumulated by indirect means, and are left to extravagant children who soon see the end of them. Men are desirous to *gain money*, by which they *lose men*.*

"Be not one of those gloomy spirits whom every thing displeases, who can endure nobody, and who have, as it were, a natural antipathy to the whole human race: But at the same time do not give up your heart to every pretendet: neither trust to slight protestations of attachment and fidelity. In the commerce of civil life, there is a just mean to be observed; by adhering to which you will escape much vexation and repentance.

"You have a secret aversion from good men; the acquaintance and conversation of the wise is

"* The Author means that it is better be not so rich, than to seek to be so by forfeiting the esteem of good men.

"[There is an affected quaintness both in the thought and expression very much in the manner of the Chinese.]"

insupportable to you: A certain proof of the depravity of your heart, and disorder of your understanding. You are richly cloathed; you ride fine horses superbly caparisoned: nothing disturbs your tranquility or breaks your rest; your table abounds with delicate meats; you swim in joy and pleasure. Death will come and surprize you in the very midst of your delights, perhaps locked in the embraces of sleep, and you will cause passengers to say; 'Whose son was this young man?'

"Every one hath his peculiar notions; your friend hath his, and is sometimes so strongly attached to them that he cannot be persuaded to make the least concession. If it only relates to indifferent things, if his views are not too unreasonable, have the compliance to indulge him in them. If on the contrary you ever contradict him, if you insist upon it that your sentiments ought always to prevail, if your self-love will not suffer you to yield to him in any thing: what will you gain? you will breed ill blood between you, and will lose by little and little his affection and confidence.

"Never employ your authority in its full extent; temper whatever is severe in it by an air of sweetness and good-nature. Neither abuse the fear and respect which your rank and dignity inspire. It will do you honour to adapt the exercise of your power to the circumstances and situation of the persons with whom you live.

"If some disaster or great misfortune befal you, and you see no means to extricate yourself; submit to the will of heaven. To complain, to sigh, to bemoan yourself, to strike the earth with your foot; is not to diminish but increase the

evil. No one is ignorant of this truth: but how seldom do we see it regarded in men's practice?

"Think much and speak little. A great parade of words only dazzles the eyes of fools; and is far inferior to a judicious silence. There are especially certain occasions, when a wise man, how fine a speaker soever he be, and whatever inclination he may have to speak, will always put a seal upon his lips.

"Forget the services you have done to others; it is their business to remember them. Do not point out the shining advantages which distinguish you from the common run of mankind, it is the part of others to find them out. The peach and the plumb speak not, they naturally leave traces of their worth.

"If you have a sharp, subtle, penetrating spirit; only apply it to the well governing of your domestic affairs: in your commerce with the world study simplicity and plain dealing. If you affect to appear more cunning than others; if there is discovered in your air and expressions, I know not what of constraint and artifice, you will always be distrusted, and will never acquire sincere friends.

"It is not enough to study the world in order to adapt yourself well to it, study yourself, and examine every evening what you have done during the day. If any action hath escaped you which you have reason to be sorry for, take proper means to correct yourself, and commit it no more. If, on the contrary, you have nothing to reproach yourself with, taste the sweet pleasure, which arises from the testimony of a good conscience.

"If you hear the praises which are bestowed

on you, with a modest simplicity, you add a new lustre to your merit. If, on the contrary, you are puffed up with this slight mark of esteem, and are seduced to assume an important and supercilious air, the favourable opinion that was entertained of you is instantly converted to prejudice, and people retract in secret the applauses of which they think you no longer worthy.

"Ruin follows gain very near: and misery is at the tail of good fortune. He alone leads a tranquil life, who is content with a decent mediocrity.

"How difficult is it to live in the world and to preserve therein irreproachable manners? It is nevertheless possible; but for this end one hath need of a continual attention and watchfulness over one's self.

"The soul ought to rule the body. How unhappy is he who suffers himself to be governed by his passions and irregular desires. You see that great man: he is an hero, that hath not his equal among all our warriors: his name makes the earth tremble; he hath crossed the four seas, he hath subdued all before him; himself is the only one he hath not been able to conquer; for he is still a slave to his body.

"You employ yourself in study, without endeavouring to comprehend what you study: the time you spend therein, is to you so much time lost. When you read the books which the sages have left us, read them with reflection: every letter, every expression ought to appear precious to you: the doctrine ought to be deeply engraven on your heart: that which goes no farther than the eyes and ears, is like a repast which one only makes in a dream.

"A kindness or favour opportunely done, may procure sometimes to him who did it a considerable fortune. A trifle often occasions great joy. Excessive love frequently turns to bitter hatred.

"Propose great models for your imitation: such as the ancient philosophers, they differed not in shape from common men, but in the qualities of the mind and heart, which have rendered them famous to ten thousand generations. Form yourself after the pattern of their integrity, their greatness of soul, their sweetness, their facility of pardoning, and their other virtues, and you will become a real sage: but if you neglect to improve the talents you have received from nature; if you are blunt, imperious, and harsh to others, you will only be a despicable creature.

"One of the best actions we can do in this life is to succour the afflicted and to relieve the indigent. If Heaven did not send calamities into the world, we should have no opportunity to exercise mercy.

"Three things are absolutely necessary to him who addicts himself to study. In the first place, to conquer his passions, and to render himself their master. Secondly, to have a sweet, tractable, complying temper. Thirdly, to hold all bad doctrines in abhorrence, and never to engage in any false sect.

"Who hath loved you more than your father and mother? What inquietudes hath your infancy caused them? What pains have they taken to bring you up? How many kinds of labour and toil have they endured to place you in your present condition? And can you carry your ingratitude and harshness so far as to displease and afflict them?

"Yet this will be the consequence, ye fathers and mothers, if you do not pay attention to the faults of your children, and if you neglect to correct them in their tender age. Above all never permit them, under a pretence of shewing their wit, to answer you pertly, or to contradict those whom they ought to reverence: if this is permitted you must never expect to see them obedient and respectful when more advanced in years.

"If you have reason on your side make it appear with a soft and gentle air; to what end those emotions of anger? this is not the way to persuade a reasonable mind. But if you have not reason on your side, and yet would carry it by downright force, you are no better than the public robbers.

"You are only employed in procuring for yourself all sorts of pleasures, and in leading a sensual and voluptuous life; you enjoy calmly all the favours of fortune, and think yourself secure from hunger, thirst, and poverty. Senseless, as you are, are you ignorant that heaven endures not the wicked, and leaves not any evil unpunished?

"There are three things you should always have before your eyes, the law of heaven, the law of the empire, and the honour of your neighbour. If you neglect these three articles, go wherever you will, you must not hope to live at ease.

"If you see a man repent of the evil he hath committed, carry your reprimand no further: if he is confounded at his fault, consider it as wiped out: if he bend himself, thrust not forth your hand, to overturn him to the earth.

"If you undertake to relieve the unhappy, do it not by halves: but if you have a correction or reprimand to bestow, do it only with sweetness and moderation.

"Life passes away with great rapidity, and returns no more. A hundred years when they are spent are no more than the twinkling of an eye. Let us then employ usefully the few days we have to live.

"In the sudden transports of a lively friendship, say not all you bear in your mind, your openness may be abused in a time of shyness. In like manner in the moment of indignation, say not all you think: should you afterwards be never so desirous of reconcilement, will you dare to present yourself before him, whom your rage hath so highly offended? Repentance follows a fault very near, and people bear along while in their heart the dart that wounds it.

"A sage ought to be a living instruction to the common class of men: there should appear nothing frivolous in his discourse, nothing irregular in his conduct, and his actions should be always conformable to the law of heaven. It is not for the valley alone in which it grows that the flower *Lan* is so beautiful and fragrant. It is not for yourself alone that you ought to acquire wisdom.

"If the father of a family bathe every day, his children will be skilful swimmers. If the father steals melons or fruits, his sons will be assassins and incendiaries. One is apt to spare a child, and laugh at his faults, instead of correcting them: it is pretended he is still too young; and while this is incessantly said and repeated,

the child grows up, he is now a great boy and becomes your punishment. People torment and afflict themselves when they have no children, and yet they frequently suffer much more when they have them.

"How hard is it to escape a bad character! It is still more difficult to deserve general esteem and approbation.

"What end do you think can be answered by that blunt and haughty air, which distinguishes you? Be good and severe at the same time, eternal peace shall reign in your family. Put a seal upon your mouth, and guard your heart as you would guard the walls of a city. Above all do not become a relater of false reports, nor of all you hear said at random.

"Study, science, and virtue, make whole families shine: application and oeconomy serve to govern them: complaisance and a pacific disposition, to keep them united: tranquility and conformity to reason, to preserve them. A man who hath neither equity, application, nor politeness, is a savage beast, whose head is covered with a bonnet.

"However dexterous a man may be, whatever service he may have performed, if he is vain enough to make it the subject of his conversation, if there escape a single word in his own praise, it is all over with him, he loses all the merit of it. If, on the contrary, he chance to fall into any fault, and do but acknowledge it and humble himself, his fault is repaired.

"The greatest part of the evils, which are felt in old age, often flow from the excesses that have been indulged in the vigour of life. One may

still with more truth assert that the afflictions of the mind and the achings of the heart, have taken root in the time of prosperity.

"Would you be in the number of these great souls, who put themselves out of the reach of all the disgraces of life? begin with bearing slight wrongs. Would you improve your talents and your virtue? endure ill fortune with patience. Still farther would you spare yourself all occasion of repentance and grief? fill your mind with useful knowledge, your heart with good thoughts: say nothing but what is good, do nothing but what is good, and only associate with good men."

O God! Preserver of the world: Self Instructor: Self Preserver and Author of all good Works, we have heard Thy laws delivered by a beloved servant. Grant, Almighty God, that we may reap instruction from them.

"Father, hallowed be Thy name: Thy kingdom come: Give us every day our bread for the morrow: and forgive us our sins as we forgive him that is indebted to us: and lead us not into temptation. Amen."

[*If the elder who performs the service, should think it necessary,* The Confession of Faith *may here be ejaculated; then an Hymn, addressed to the great Creator; afterwards conclude the service with a discourse on morality.*]

CONFESSION OF FAITH.

1st, I BELIEVE, with perfect faith, than an Omnipotent and Almighty Being, which is denominated God, created the universal space of nature, and preserves it by unerring laws.

2dly, I believe, with perfect faith, that *He* is the Father of all good, and that *He alone* is the only proper object of the worship of man.

3dly, I believe, with perfect faith, that God has in various ages, and in different countries, revealed his will by the mouths of certain wise sages who have expounded his laws.

4thly, I believe, with perfect faith, that these servants of the Deity, ought not to be worshipped as subordinate Deities, neither co-equel, nor co-eternal with him: He alone is the object of our worship.

5thly, I believe, with perfect faith, that this life is only probationary, and that we shall all be rewarded in another state according to our good or bad conduct.

6thly, I believe, with perfect faith, that the departed souls of all men who have taken virtue for their guide, now enjoy eternal felicity; and that the souls of all men now on earth, and the souls of all who may hereafter be created, will be saved, if they follow the same guide.